

MERRY MUTHAF#CKIN XXXMAS

EST. 2004

# ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

Vol. 14-#1-Issue 79-December/January 2017-18

SLOW  
FUBAR  
MENACE  
THE ADICTS  
FASHIONISM  
DEAD KENNEDYS  
THE SMUGGLERS  
ANGRY SNOWMANS  
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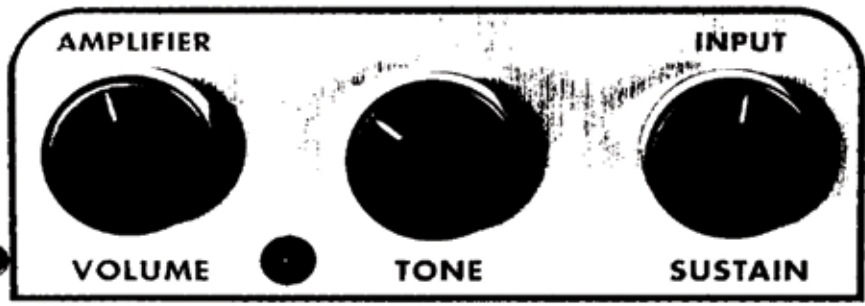
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## No Heart

Interview by Esther Andrews

I had the opportunity to talk with Mike Underwood about his newest three-piece oil! outfit, No Heart. Featuring members of Last Crusade, Emergency, and Alternate Action, No Heart brings a sorta tough energy I don't think Victoria has felt for a while. They have a brand new split out with Australian oil! band The Opposition, on Longshot and BDS Records.

**Absolute Underground: Where did you come up with your name, No Heart?**

Mike Underwood: We were having a tough time all agreeing on a name, so Will and I were having a few beers 'round his place and decided to look for band names from the tracklistings on some of his records we were listening to. The Vibrators were on, and once "No Heart" came on, we knew that was the one. The boys all liked it, so that was that!

**AU: How did you manage the split with The Opposition? Tell me about the artwork. It's a gorgeous album cover.**

MU: Yeah it's a wicked cover, eh! Bela, the singer/guitarist of The Opposition is an artist (clearly), so she painted this beauty up for the split. We initially thought the recordings were going to be a 7" EP, but BDS, the European label involved in the release, was keen for it to be an LP, which

is how the idea for a split 12" came about. I know a few of the members from The Opposition through friends as well, as old bands of ours played a gig together a few years ago, and I'd heard demos that were great, so we asked if they had plans to record anytime soon and luckily they did! It was quite a while in the making, but definitely worth the wait.



**AU: Who are you as a band? Yourself and Will have been in some pretty notable bands over the years. How did you come to get a bass player with no previous experience?**

MU: I play guitar and sing, Will is on drums and backing vocals, and we have Jordan "Tiptoe Scorpio" on bass. I played in Last Crusade and Thankless Graft in the UK, as well as a slew of punk bands here in my teens. Will's been in a lot of bands, most notably Emergency, Alternate Action and Zip Guns. With oil! and skinhead, at least in my opinion, having someone in the band who's into the same approach, style, music and lifestyle is more important than whether or not they have had much experience playing music. Jordan and I met at a soul night when I was visiting home for the first time in years, several years ago now, and before we moved back a year later, we talked about the idea of getting an oil!

band together. He's come along in leaps and bounds on bass as well, you can really hear it on our new LP that we just finished recording.

**AU: Would you say you like to delve into political issues with your music? Why or why not? What do you like writing about?**

MU: I'd say not particularly, no. Overly political bands are boring and/or preachy as fuck, not to mention have ruined oil! at different times throughout the last 30+ years. We're three working guys, most of us have families, so we write about the shit we deal with day-to-day, I guess. Work, booze, stress, our town's affordability and drug crisis, etc. Not re-inventing the wheel, haha.

**AU: Care to touch on the differences between the scene in Leeds from when you lived there compared to Victoria? And what is the biggest change you noticed in Victoria's punk scene when you moved back from the UK?**

MU: There's a whole lot more going on in the UK in general, it's easy to just sit back and enjoy events and gigs that others put on, which I did for a few years before doing any bands there. While in Victoria, you often have to do it yourself, which can be annoying and downright depressing at times, but ultimately forces you to be creative and gives it a very DIY attitude, which is great. There were a few changes I noticed when we moved back, one being a lot of new faces from the mainland and beyond having moved here, including several ex-members of Alternate Action, Will included. Also there seems to be a lot more of an interest in oil! Now, compared to when we first moved away, everything seemed pretty crust and grind or skate punk-centric before. [The current interest] is, in no small part, down to 737 promoting some oil! Gigs, I'm sure.

**AU: How did you guys get hooked up with Longshot Records?**

MU: Mike Jo is an old pal of Will's, and a friend of mine, as well. He's released stuff by Emergency,

## VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY

Alternate Action, Last Crusade and Thankless Graft, so it was only natural for him to do No Heart. He is the one who put Will and I in touch actually, Will moved to town a few months before I moved back and we got to talking/drinking/jamming shortly after.

**AU: Any plans to tour? If so, where?**

MU: Well most of the band has kids, so no vigorous touring in on the cards. We plan on getting to both Europe and Quebec in the fullness of time, though... apart from that, we just plan on playing locally, as well as a few gigs in Vancouver next year.

**AU: What plans do you have for another record? Any full lengths on the horizon?**

MU: We've actually just finished recording our debut LP, called *Can't Get Out*. We're having it mastered and getting the artwork together very soon. It'll be on Longshot records again that's a given, not sure who will be handling the European release just yet, but we're talking to a few guys over there.

**AU: Dream gig?**

MU: 1 in 12 club in Bradford, West Yorkshire, with Cocksparrer, Templars, The Jam, Chords and Protex, haha. In reality, some newer bands we'd love to play with most likely in Europe are Sabotage, Syndrome 81, Bromure and Squellette, to name a few. Would also love to do a gig with Montreal boys Ultra Razzia.

**AU: Top five local bands?**

MU: Would have really struggled with this question years ago, plenty of good 'uns now though! In no particular order:

Kraxxa, The Mandlebaums, Richie and The Cool Jerks, Collagen, No Mas

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## Dead Asylum

Interview by Stepan Soroka

Dead Asylum have been pummeling audiences with their energetic mix of thrash and death metal for close to six years. The band released their second full-length album, *Death Always Wins*, earlier this year and just completed a nearly month-long tour across the US. We caught up with them at their East Van jam space to talk about mortality and fancy Doritos.

**Absolute Underground: Who are you and why are we here?**

Mike Lister: We are Dead Asylum and you're here because we have released our new record, *Death Always Wins*, and we just had a fuckin' killer tour of America.

**AU: Can you give us a brief history of the band?**

Mike: Well, it started almost six years ago. Sam and I were in separate bands in Vancouver and those dissolved, in one way or another, and I won't get into that history. Sam messaged me to see if I wanted to jam. I said "Yeah, sure," and we wrote a couple of songs, did the old Craigslist find and found a couple of guys, and Dead Asylum was born. We've had some member changes since then but I think we're stronger than ever.

**AU: You guys just completed a month-long US tour. Was that your first time playing the States?**

Samantha Landa: Our second. We did the west coast of US in 2014, for ten days.

**AU: Touring the US can be quite daunting for independent Canadian bands, particularly regarding paperwork, visas, etc. Do you have any advice for bands that are thinking about heading south?**

Mike: Get Sam to do it for you.

Sam: No, I don't want to do it [laughs]. I think number one is that it is not as difficult as it might seem, if you don't have a criminal record. If you have people in your band that have even minor issues you might have more of a tough time getting through. If you are all Canadian citizens it is much easier. For us, because we're Canadian citizens and we're pretty well behaved the paperwork is not as bad as some might make it seem. A lot of people don't do it because they say it's too expensive, it costs thousands of dollars, blah blah blah, too much paperwork, too big of a hassle, but I think you're missing out on a big opportunity. You've got an entire massive country right there. It's absolutely worth spending the money and it doesn't cost thousands unless you're getting a rush visa.

Mike: Plan at least a year in advance.

Sam: We started booking this tour last December and we did the tour in August and September. You have to allow for up to six months to process the visa. Usually it's quicker than that but you never know. And you don't have to have your entire tour booked at that time, just the first and last date. We booked this whole tour ourselves, we didn't hire an agent or anybody. I recommend hiring an agent, because booking is a pain and it takes a lot of time. If you don't have connections it can take a long time to build those. For us, money was an issue, so luckily we've got some connections and were able to do it ourselves.

Eric Morrison: And I would say that if you do get a booking agent, make sure who you're dealing with is on top of it. A lot of people don't have your full best interests in mind.

**AU: Tell us about the best and worst moment of tour.**

Mike: There were so many good shows and good people. I'd say the maniacs in Eugene, Oregon. They were fuckin' rabid beasts and I loved it.

Sam: It was a pretty small venue but there were a lot of people there and there were a bunch of people up front that were just moshing. I love seeing people tear it up at a small venue. You kind of have to lead the way and start the pit, and they did.

Mike: And I won't mention which city, but we had some sound issues at a certain show and it was just fuckin' awful. I'll stop there. That was the worst though.

**AU: Aesthetically and lyrically, your band deals with a lot of dark and morbid themes. What is it about the concept of death that inspires you musically?**

Mike: I mean, everybody dies, right? It's fascinating that no matter what you do, you always end up dead. You could be the lowest peasant or the highest king, and no matter what, death is the great equalizer. To me, that's not necessarily dark, it's reality, and I'm really drawn to that.

Sam: I think it's healthy to focus on things like death and darkness, and some of the injustices of the world. I feel like it's not healthy to bury it and pretend that everything is great and live in a fantasy world.

Mike: And death is the ultimate peace. That's it. There's nothing to worry about anymore. I find that appealing.

Eric: Yeah, just the reality. I've always hated... living [laughs]. Naw, I've always hated lying to myself about everything and being realistic about things seems like the better, more logical way to be. So why not acknowledge death?

**AU: In the "Forgotten Sacrifice" music video, there is a scene in which a woman gets her shin cheese grated and is then force-fed the gratings. Is that an idea that one of the band members came up with?**

Sam: Just the eating part. Our director for that video, Joshua Keith Young, who we highly recommend working with, had the idea for the whole video. We let him have creative control with that. It was

Joshua's idea to have the cheese grater and the leg and we loved it. The original idea was that there would be cages with animals and he was going to grate the leg and feed it to the animals and make her watch, which is pretty messed up. And then I think at some point we were having trouble getting the animals.

Mike: Bylaws and stuff.

Sam: And I'm like, "Why don't you just feed it to her?" And that was that.

**AU: You guys self-released your second full-length album earlier this year and booked your own American tour. How important is the DIY mentality to Dead Asylum?**

Mike: I think it shows how much we want it. We sacrificed so much just to get on the road. When we want to move forward with record companies and managers and things like that, it shows them that this band has busted its balls to do it. Imagine what they could do with a little help. I think that's really important. And we like knowing that we can kick ass, too.

Eric: Especially since we don't have anyone in our corner right now to do it, so it might as well be us. We're not going to stop moving.

Sam: We don't want to wait around for someone to discover us or something. At this point we want to be making strides forward, and someone's gotta do it.

Eric: We're going to keep playing music. That's what we want to do. If we have to do it ourselves, then so be it.

Sam: People seem to like us and like what we're doing. We had a really good response on this US tour.

Mike: They're already clamouring for us back. "When you coming back?"

Eric: Never! We're done with that scene, America. Take your fancy Doritos and keep 'em.

## VANCOUVER VENGEANCE



**AU: If Dead Asylum was stuck on a desert island and had to eat one member to survive, who would it be?**

Mike: I'd eat myself.

Sam: Well, if Mike is already going to eat himself then we might as well eat Mike if he's OK with that.

Mike: I'd be chowing down.

Sam: We aren't even stuck on this island. There's a bridge right there.

Eric: It's more of a peninsula. We could walk.

Mike: Nope. Eatin' myself.

**AU: What does the future hold for Dead Asylum?**

Mike: Well, we want to definitely tour way more. Europe is definitely a dream that we will make a reality. We want to go all the way across Canada. Go visit the ol' maritimers.

Sam: We're starting to write again, as you saw when you walked in.

Mike: We're also starting out online merch sales, at [thedeasylum.com](http://thedeasylum.com) and [deadasylum.bandcamp.com](http://deadasylum.bandcamp.com).

**AU: Any last words?**

Mike: Death always wins.

*thedeasylum.com*

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# CALGARY CARNAGE



## Hazzerd

Interview by Apryl Fawn

**Absolute Underground: First off, the most cliché interview question: Can you tell us a little history about Hazzerd? Members? Influences? Evolution? Labels?**

Hazzerd: Hazzerd was formed in August 2012 by drummer/vocalist Dylan Westendorp and guitarist Brendan Malycky, after Dylan responded to a Kijiji advertisement posted by Brendan. It wasn't until the second jam session a month later that we decided to start a band together. The band has gone through multiple members over the years until the lineup finally stabilized in 2017. Dylan is an excellent asset to the creative process. He plays drums, can sing, and dabbles with guitar playing as well. Toryin Schadlich was added due to the band's need for a second guitar player, and he filled the lead guitar position well with his cool licks and shreds. Bass player David Sprague was the final missing piece to the puzzle. The band had been searching for a bass player for a long time, and Dave was exactly what we needed. Hazzerd plays a brand of thrash metal similar to bands like Megadeth, Testament, Overkill, Havok, and many more. Our first album was released in September 2017, through World War Now

other than making music. Brendan: I am addicted to hockey.

**AU: Fun!**

**A hockey league of metal musicians sounds like a great idea for a movie. Perhaps another heroic tale of overcoming adversity in the industry as a team... ha. Speaking of which, what do you feel is the biggest issue facing up-and-coming or local artists/bands today?**

Hazzerd: From our experience, the scene in Calgary is fairly strong, but when a scene has drama between bands and people treat music as a competition, it can be detrimental to the growth of the bands and the scene as a whole. The lack of places to play for underage bands is also a big issue.

**AU: Yes, that subject has been mentioned before by several bands and many fans. In previous years there were a lot more opportunities for our younger comrades to**

Records, who signed the band after hearing a few tracks off the album.

**AU: Outside of music, what are some of your other interests?**

Dylan: I enjoy playing video games immensely. It is my favourite activity

come check out live talent. We have heard of plans in the works to make that happen again. It's an effective way to spark passion in future artists and keep the scene alive! Do your members have any brand loyalty when it comes to instruments?

Hazzerd: Dylan prefers to use his (1977) Ludwig kit that belonged to his father. Brendan likes the sound of the Marshall JVM 210H. Tory loves his Marshall JCM 800 head for those sustained leads, and Dave rocks Hartke amplifiers.

**AU: Awesome! Creates a killer live production! Are all of your members involved in the writing process?**

Hazzerd: All members are involved in the artistic process, yes. In the past, most of the riffs were written by Brendan, and Dylan would create the drums and lyrics for the song. Now that we have the strongest lineup we've ever had, the writing has really improved. Toryin and Dave have brought valuable contributions to the evolution of our sound.

**AU: The diversity in your current lineup definitely shows. You each bring your own uniquely developed talent to the table. Many thrash bands have carried on the legacy of the hardcore punk subculture of the late 70s. Anti-commercialism and anti-establishmentarian messages are commonly delivered to listeners of these genres. Do you have an ongoing theme in your music? Are your lyrics based on actual experiences from your lives, or do you prefer to write on general topics?**

Hazzerd: Dylan's lyrics are based on personal as well as general topics. Thematically, many of our songs are about addiction, religious warfare, secret societies, and destruction of life. Occasionally we will write a more light-hearted tune about partying. You know... for substance.

**AU: Ha. Well you metal guys sure can party! What's your favourite song to play live?**

Hazzerd: "No Way Out" is our favourite tune to

play live. It really gets the crowd going.

**AU: New fans, check it out! These guys slay their live performances. Do you have any onstage pet peeves, or pet peeves regarding the industry in general?**

Dylan: Inside the industry I would say when labels force bands to produce commercialized music in order to make more money, rather than letting the band do what they would like. Also, the ongoing issues of the piracy of music.

**AU: Yes, agreed. The music industry as a whole unfortunately has a well-documented history of deceit and swindling. It's great to see artists forming strength in numbers and taking credit where it's due. We salute you, and all other composers of original material. Drawing to a close... Imagine it's a lazy Sunday, and you're sitting at home with a drink and a book. What are you drinking, and what are you reading?**

Hazzerd: We don't read much but we do like beer! Haha!

**AU: Hey, beer makes a lot of good stories to use as material in a future autobiography! Just don't black out! We wanna hear it all. Lastly! Are any of your members involved in any other projects we should check out? What's up next for Hazzerd?**

Hazzerd: None of our members are involved in other projects. Up next, we hope to tour Canada and/or the USA! Until that time, we are writing our second album, and we're really looking forward to the final product!

Check out "Absolute Destruction," the first single on Hazzerd's debut album, Misleading Evil, here: <https://youtu.be/ZHjG3Dmm2XU>, and stay updated on the band's latest releases and gig schedule online- @HazzerdThrash

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- 01 NIX DICKSONS  
TELLY + BLACK PHOENIX ORCHESTRA  
+ KRIS WHITEWAY & THE MARLBORS
- 02 PANCAKE  
THE COREY HOTLINE + THE RUMBLE
- 03 RICK & MORTY TRIVIA
- 08 SELLOUT. ALBUM RELEASE  
BAD ANIMAL + SILENCE THE SWAMPS + CHAN
- 09 HANG THE DJ HOLIDAY EDITION  
RETRO · NEW WAVE · CLASSIC ALTERNATIVE · GOTH · INDUSTRIAL · BRITPOP
- 13 WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIG BAND
- 14 FAKE MUSTACHE

DEC 23

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- 09 IN/VERTIGO
- 10 SLOWCOASTER
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- 17 HANG THE DJ NO COVER BEFORE 10PM  
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- 24 GOOD RIDDANCE  
A VULTURE WAKE

FEB 01

CASH'D OUT  
WITH GUESTS

FEB 24

GOOD RIDDANCE  
ANNUAL RUCKUS WAKE

MAR 10

BELVEDERE DOWNWAY  
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MAR 15

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# Christmas Punk

## A Brief History

By Ty Stranglehold

It's that time of year again. The time for lights, holly, mistletoe and crippling debt. The onslaught of mass capitalism with a sprinkling of religion thrown in... That's right. It's Christmastime. The holiest of holidays, the best time of the year... For punk rock? You know it!

About ten years ago, I managed to make my own name damn near synonymous with the sub-sub genre of Xmas Punk (or Yulecore, or Skannukkah, or Kwanzover for that matter), but the truth of the matter is that Christmas and punk rock have been mixing for a lot longer than that. Let's jump in with the Ghost of Christmas Punk Past and take a little sleigh ride.

The fact of the matter is that Christmas Punk has been around almost as long as punk itself. In 1977, UK punk band The Boys decided it would be fun to swap two letters of their name around December and release a Christmas themed single ("Run Rudolph Run b/w The Worm Song"). The results were indeed hilarious so The Yobs kept appearing year after year with singles ("Silent Night" in 1978 and "Rub-A-Dum-Dum b/w" Another Christmas in 1979) and then a full-length album (1980's *The Yobs' Christmas Album*). The premise was simple; take the piss out of a usually serious religious holiday with tales of drinking and debauchery. Throw in some raunchy send ups of yuletide classics and the punks now had a reason to ding-dong merrily away.

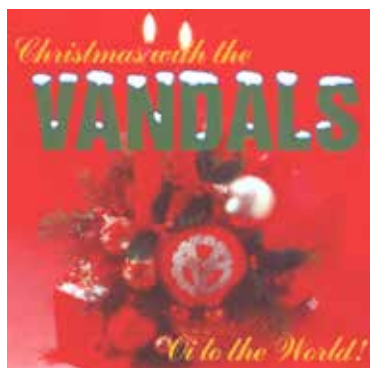
While The Yobs were doing their thing up through the early to mid 80s, several other punk bands tried their hand at a Christmas tune here and there, most notably "White Christmas" by Stiff

Little Fingers, "There Ain't No Sanity Clause" by The Damned, "Silent Night" by The Dickies, "Fuck Christmas" by Fear and "Merry Christmas (I Don't Wanna Fight Tonight)" by the Ramones. Even closer to home, bands got in on the action. Surrey's weirdo punks No Fun released the pants-pissingly funny *No Fun At Christmas Again* tape.

It wasn't until the mid 90s that we would see Christmas punk appear as more than just a song here or there. Two releases in particular solidified my love of Christmas Punk more than any other. Showcase Showdown's 1995 single "Merry Christmas I Fucked Your Snowmans b/w Ho-Ho- Ho Chi Mihn," and The Vandals' full-length epic from 1996 *Oi! To The World*. I got both records the same year

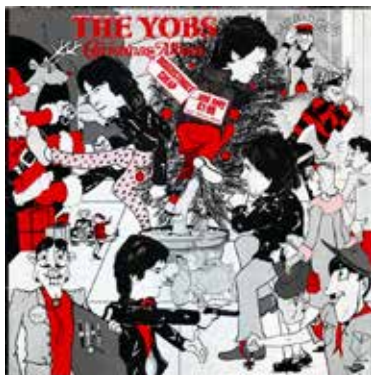
and that was when it became clear that there was a better way to celebrate the holidays. The 90s also happened to be the era of the punk rock compilation album, so it only made sense that there would be some Christmas themed ones out there as well. A couple of favourites of mine were *Happy Birthday Baby Jesus* vol. 1 & 2, and *Hardcore Holiday*.

By the time the century turned, I was a full-blown Christmas Punk maniac. I couldn't wait until it was time to start playing my mixed tapes and CDs, gearing up for my big annual Xmas Punkstavananza on my radio show on CFUV. I had spent years collecting Christmas punk songs in all different formats from bands all over the world. From Poison Idea to The Pogues, and from GG Allin to Social Distortion. Punk rock Christmas had become a thing and I needed



My vision was a Christmas punk band that also incorporated my absolute love of parody. We have fun. We have released three full-length albums, two EPs and a split single with Poison Idea (which I cannot believe exists!).

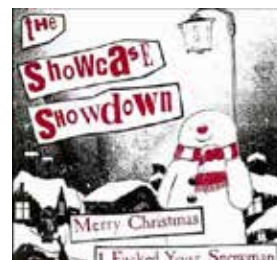
A couple of years into doing the Snowmans, I began meeting other bands online that were doing the Christmas punk thing, too. We were asked to submit a song for Black Hole Records' *Cashing In On Christmas* Vol. 3 compilation. The guys who run the label also have a band called Missile Toads, who do both originals and some parody style stuff. They are great, and I swear one day we will get around to doing that split record we keep talking about! There is also Ohio's awesome Figgy & The Scrooges (damn great name, I wish I had thought of it!). They put out their "Alcohololiday" single in 2013.



One of the higher profile instances of Christmas Punk in recent years came in the form of Bad Religion's album *Christmas Songs* from 2013. I will just come right out and say that it missed the mark completely with its sombre and serious tone. What's fun in that? Legendary punk band takes a bunch of religious

Christmas songs and... Covers them faithfully? Ugh. No thanks, I'd rather have a slice of Aunt Helen's fruitcake from last year.

Christmas Punk is here to stay. I mean, who wouldn't rather get a few laughs while listening to some ripping tunes while having drinks with friends and family? Now go grab a spicy cup of nog and go for it!



### Ol' Saint Dick's Top Xmas Punk Tunes (that aren't Angry Snowmans)

1. "Merry Christmas, I Fucked Your Snowman" – The Showcase Showdown
2. "C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S" – The Yobs
3. "Oi! To The World" – The Vandals
4. "Daddy Drank Our Xmas Money" – TVTVS
5. "Silent Night" – The Dickies
6. "Lonely Christmas" – Sloppy Seconds
7. "Drinkin' Up Xmas" – Dwarves
8. "Reindeer In The Night" – Missile Toads
9. "We'll Call It Christmastime" – Supersuckers
10. "364 Days" – Murder City Devils
11. "Merry Christmas (I Don't Wanna Fight Tonight)" – Ramones
12. "Kris Kringle Was A Car Thief" – Wesley Willis
13. "The Night Before Christmas" – Clawhammer
14. "No Fun At Christmas" – No Fun
15. "Merry Fucking Christmas" – Mr. T Experience
16. "Black Christmas" – MDC
17. "Santa Got Run Over By My Chevy" – Manic Hispanic
18. "Fuck Christmas" – Fear
19. "Christmas Time For The Skins" – Crucial Youth
20. "There Ain't No Sanity Clause" – The Damned





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## Deaner

Interview by Tormaghn Van Slyke

From Deaner's Twitter account:

"There's like a million fuckin' Christmas songs and not one about drivin' your girlfriend's Ford Fiesta through a blizzard on Boxing day."

"Like my old man always said, "Deaner, if you build a snowman on the highway, she's gonna get plowed."

Dean Murdoch (played by Paul J. Spence) and Terry Cahill (played by David Lawrence) rose to fame following the unassuming release of *FUBAR*, the 2002 cult classic mockumentary that was filmed in four weeks on a shoe-string budget.

The movie documents Deaner and Terry's day-to-day routine of headbanging and getting trashed. To complicate things, Deaner finds out he has testicular cancer and he is forced to deal with losing his right nut. Exuding bravery, and several moments of indignity, the two cut out a slice of real Albertan subculture as they voice their sometimes intolerant points of view, their hopes, dreams, and aspirations to "just give'r" whilst they

swear and tease the hell out of one another.

As fate, or legend, would have it, after the first movie Deaner and Terry stayed true to their characters off-screen. During the eight years before the sequel was made, these Albertan anti-heroes continued to spend their time shotgunning Pilsners, playing



driveway hockey and camping. Then came *FUBAR II: Balls to the Wall*.

*FUBAR II*, released in 2010, packs in comedy and satire with a much bigger budget. This time around, Deaner and Terry land pipeline jobs in Fort McMurray, AB, after an incidental house-wrecking eviction party. The northern Alberta winter and sixteen-hour workdays are not easy to endure, but these headbangers were down to their last shrapnel; they needed to make cash.

After Deaner purposely breaks his foot to collect "free money" in a Worker's Compensation scam, he finds out his cancer has returned. Deaner now loses his left nut, and finds it harder than ever in the "ice palace." Everything falls apart, and he becomes suicidal, until he finally finds his voice and rejoices.

Enter *FUBAR: Age of Computer*. It premiered on VICELAND on November 3rd, and only five episodes have aired at the time of this article, but

it's an instant classic. The show begins where they left off, but the two quickly flee to Calgary, AB, to escape the Fort Mac wildfires. There, they settle into Terry's cousin's illegal basement suite and start using the internet for the first time. You can stream the new show for free on VICE and Citytv.

*Absolute Underground* had a chance for a quick interview with the Deaner on a, likely hungover, Saturday morning. Enjoy.

**Absolute Underground: Deaner, how are you?**

Dean Murdock: Deadly man.

**AU: Cool. Listen, it's the Punk Rock Christmas Issue here at *Absolute Underground*, so let's go back to *FUBAR II*, when you were spending Christmas in Fort Mac? You weren't doing so good after finding out you were losing your second testicle to cancer. What was the whole Fort Mac experience like?**

DM: It was cold as a witch's tit.

**AU: What do you guys have planned for Christmas this year?**

DM: No plans are the best plans.

**AU: The first episode of *FUBAR: Age of the Computer* starts with you and Terry camping outside Fort Mac. While partying, you drunkenly lit the end of your electric bass on fire. When you guys woke up, Fort Mac was ablaze. Are you sure you guys didn't start them?**

DM: I don't know what yer talking about bud.

**AU: You referred to evacuating Fort Mac as a "crimson nightmare of smoke and danger." Can you elaborate on that?**

DM: Ever been inside a milkshake of fire? That's what it was like.

**AU: So, you guys flee from the fires to Terry's cousin Shank's place in Calgary, and end up living in his basement bunker. How is it possible you've never seen the internet before? What are your thoughts on fetish sites?**

DM: I seen it, but I never used it. Like magic.

**AU: You and Terry were able to use your eviction notice as proof of residence and get \$1,800 from the Fort Mac Wildfire relief fund.**

**How did you guys spend your money?**

DM: I built a home studio and recorded the Night Seeker record.

**AU: How's your buddy Tron doing?**

DM: tron funkin blow.

**AU: When it comes to your singing voice, like Terry says, "Your ball-less-ness is a real treasure." You can really hit those deadly high rock notes. What's that like?**

DM: I can break glass at 20 feet and change the oil on a car without touching it.

**AU: I bet it was good to get your old band Night Seeker going again. Tell me about that.**

DM: Fucking deadly to be back in the saddle, man.

**AU: Shank's pad seems like a magical place. Tell us about that DIY studio you have set up.**

DM: It's all electric, like a fuckin' electricity plant with speakers.

**AU: You guys also have a lot of money making schemes you work out of that place—you sell liquor to kids out of the basement window; Shank has an tiny Airbnb "deadly hidey hole" room where people have to piss in the sink; you were the "silent partner" in Airijuana, a drone weed delivery service; and now there's plans to invent a Beer-Bot. Do you consider these jobs or just side hustles?**

DM: Those are just side hustles. I also sell hard to find beer to people with no passports.

**AU: I won't ruin it for people who haven't seen up to episode five, but you've been busy. Lately, you've been nicknamed Deana and inspired an activist movement, been caught on Creep Catcher for trying to hire a 14-year-old intern, you stole a dog, took hormone pills and wrote a space odyssey called *Amazon Chicks Who Shoot Lasers Out Their Tits*. So, you've been keeping your schedule busy. Do you have anything to add?**

DM: No man. Just that I'm gonna giver daily.

[video.vice.com/en\\_ca/show/fubar-age-of-computer](https://video.vice.com/en_ca/show/fubar-age-of-computer)





# The Adicts

## And It Was So!

Interview with vocalist Keith "Monkey" Warren  
By Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you best known for?**

Monkey: I'm Monkey from the Adicts. We're a band that's been around for 40 years. We still love what we do and try to entertain people in a punk rock, glam rock, circus carnival kind of way.

**AU: How did you get the name Monkey? Is that on your birth certificate?**

Monkey: No but it came soon after that. I've had that name since I was a kid, because I have big



ears and I look like a monkey, they say. I'm a little bit hairy, too.

**AU: What was the origin of The Adicts?**

Monkey: We came from the English punk rock background of the late 1970s. In about 1977, we just came together with a mutual interest in the scene and that was basically our inspiration and motivation back then. But over the years we developed our own style, and our own look. We've got our own unique sound and look that's just our own.

**AU: You also have an obsession with A Clockwork Orange?**

Monkey: We've used that image for a long time, but it's not something we started off with. We just like the striking look, and there is a message in the movie that is akin to punk rock as well, but

fundamentally we just thought it looked cool. We still reference the movie a lot in our lyrics.

**AU: What was the inspiration for your theatrics and makeup?**

Monkey: To give as much as we can and be as entertaining as possible. There is an element of

punk rock that's just kind of down and basic but we want to be bigger and bolder and brighter. We have lots of glam rock influences as well. We come from an era of Bowie, Roxy Music, Sweet, and all that. We like the entertainment fun factor of all of it, we're not a political band. We're more about escapism and entertainment, so any element that can add to that, whether it's makeup or confetti or beach balls or toys, or anything. I think details are important. I like a show to be full of action and colour. I think our job is to provide entertainment for an hour or two, a little escapism to put a smile on some faces.

**AU: At Punk Rock Bowling, you had that weird outfit with the silver bird wings last year.**

Monkey: It's important that you don't become stale, or keep repeating yourself. As an artist you look for different things, and we keep getting new ideas so we try to incorporate those into

our shows as much as possible. I don't want people to come see us and it be predictable, there needs to be spontaneity and surprise.

**AU: Tell us about your newest album?**

Monkey: It's called *And It Was So*. We don't write prolifically, we live in California and Kid, our drummer lives in the UK. We're the main writers so we don't come together to write so often. We all have different components and ideas

of songs that we bring together when we actually sit down once a year and focus on writing. Time just came around for new songs and a new label. You never know where the songs are going to come from, or how they're going to end up. So the album, we're very proud and happy with it. It's fresh, it's bright, it's inventive. We're not just repeating ourselves. We want to keep moving forward, it keeps us alive as a band.

**AU: How do you write so many earworm songs that get stuck in your head?**

Monkey: Who knows? I mean it's the same as any artists, whether you're a writer, a painter, or a musician. These things just come from somewhere, it's not a conscious effort. You sit down with a blank piece of paper and you end up with a dozen songs and things happen when we come together because we bounce off each other.

There is a chemistry that we three have. Where they come from is a mystery, maybe parallel universes where we have doppelgangers writing for us.

**AU: On the new album, are there some stand out tracks or themes?**

Monkey: There isn't anything thematic about it, it's not a concept album, it's just a collection of songs that are eclectic but still work together as a group of songs. It's a very listenable album if people still listen to albums from track 1 to track 12 or whatever. There are some pretty straightforward, catchy punk rock songs, there are some more experimental songs, there are some grooves, you know, classic Adicts hooks. It's just another great Adicts album, probably our best album in some time. I think better than the last two or three. Not to knock the other albums, we just seemed to have really clicked on this one.

**AU: I really liked the last few albums, they seem to grow on you.**

Monkey: I think this will grow something bigger on you!

**AU: You are on Nuclear Blast Records now. How did that come about?**

Monkey: Well, Nuclear Blast have a sub label called Arising Empire and they have more of a Punk Rock division. They have bands like The Exploited, Discharge, Peter and the Test Tube Babies. This label is very good and very successful. They know how to promote a band, work a band, and they're very supportive of us. The owner is an old fan so it goes back to when he was a kid and he saw us play in Dusseldorf. So for him to work with us is exciting. We're excited by that enthusiasm. You want people to really believe in the band rather than see it as an opportunity to make money.

**AU: It seems like a really professional package about to be released for this new album. Different styles of vinyl, CDs, and shirts.**

Monkey: I think they're even releasing cassette tapes, so we're covering all the different mediums.

**AU: Any crazy stories from your time at Punk Rock Bowling?**

Monkey: The main thing about Punk Rock Bowling is it's a big party and a big reunion of bands that you've come across on the road. It's like other festivals like Rebellion and that. We've all been at this for a long time now, and it's good to come across old friends. We're a little older, and a little mellower now, but we still have a good time. People get lost. Fall down and get back up again, wake up with tattoos they shouldn't have gotten.

**AU: I was noticing the boys in the band were taking advantage of the legalization of marijuana there. Do you partake as well?**

Monkey: I've never been much of a smoker, but everyone else likes to. It's usually a post show thing. We try to be professional about the performance and not be fucked up. Sometimes tickets are expensive, and you like to give your best. We're not the most technically proficient band in the world, and sometimes I am inclined to forget a lyric or two because I get distracted by a ball hitting me in the head or something like that. It's fun, we're not so slick that we can't get away with it, and we can just laugh it off if something goes wrong. There is not a lot of smoking weed,



and drinking before the show, but afterwards they're free to do as they want.

**AU: With the song "Viva La Revolution," what were you trying to get going with that?**

Monkey: That's more of a commentary of the perpetual state of revolution. In the throes of revolution everybody is liberated and joyous because change is coming. It's about really trying to catch that moment, because eventually the revolution comes and it's not what we hoped for. You know, it's another dictator or bad government. Not just revolution but an election or something, you always hope for the best and it doesn't always work out that way. The song is a commentary on savouring the moment when you're in the midst of a revolution, that feeling of a revolution.

**AU: The song Spank Me Baby, are you into some kinky stuff?**

Monkey: I can be kinky, yeah. To spank or be spanked...

**AU: Spank the Monkey!**

Monkey: You can spank your own monkey!

**AU: Do you think you'll tour Canada? Is there a reason we haven't seen you?**

Monkey: We've had some issues with immigration, but that's been resolved now. We did Amnesia festival, we played Toronto and Montreal. So those issues have been resolved, hopefully next year we'll be back in Canada.

**AU: This is your 40th year as a band. Anything else you'd like to mention or promote?**

Monkey: We have the album and there will be a couple singles off there. We're working on some videos, and a new website. In some ways it's a new beginning for us with the new label. Lots of positive stuff going on. We're going to be out touring. Spain, Germany, Mexico, a festival in Texas, after we go back to Europe where we are touring with Die Toten Hosen. We have a busy end of the year.

**AU: Any last words for all the young Canadian droogs?**

Monkey: Stay positive, stay creative. Hope we see you soon.

[theadicts.net](http://theadicts.net)

PHOTO SOURCE: [theadicts.net](http://theadicts.net)







# Ghoul

## Dungeon Bastards

Interview with Cremator, Digestor, and Fermentor  
By Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Cremator: I am Cremator from Ghoul and I am infamous for burning down all the landmarks of Europe.

Digestor: I'm Digestor from Ghoul and I'm infamous for winning 100 hot dog eating contests in a row.

**AU: You have poop on your shoulder, tell us what's going on here.**

Cremator: Well the crowd in Vancouver is so wild they just turned their asses to us in presentation, but couple of them were too drunk to really be at a show so they just pooped.

Digestor: It's like being at a zoo.

**AU: Ghoul, horror influences. Obviously fans of VHS?**

Cremator: Yeah, actually no. Beta Max is the only available system in Creepsylvania, where we live. It's a far superior system, higher picture quality

and far less movies available, so really you're saving yourself some time from watching a bunch of bullshit.

Digestor: You're not talking about VHS the movie, you're talking about the format?

**AU: All I know is that because Beta Max didn't want to release porn, it just killed it.**

Cremator: Well, Ghoul's not interested in porn, we're only interested in eating corpses. We don't give a shit about your dicks or your vaginas because well, I don't even have a dick anymore. It got blown off in an explosion, and Digestor's is just mutated with so many STDs that he can't have sex legally.

Digestor: It's just a scaly syphilitic mess down there.

**AU: There was a movie, The Town That Dreaded Sundown, also Friday the 13th Part II, does your attire have any inspiration from those?**

Cremator: Never heard of them!

Digestor: Have you ever heard CB4? The bag heads? Chris Rock was a great inspiration to Ghoul.

**AU: Tell us about the very first album you did, the inspiration, going out on tour with GWAR, the origin of the band.**

Cremator: Our first record was surreptitiously recorded by a label, and put out without our knowledge. They bootlegged us, and we

were just three cannibals at that time happily making thrash metal and eating corpses out at the graveyard. We found out we got ripped off so we kind of had to make a thing of it and we said we gotta take this back. We said, we don't even want to play music for any of you stupid people, we're sick of it, we hate touring, we hate everything, we just want to eat corpses but we can't have people ripping us off. So fuck it, here we are.

**AU: Who's this other member of the band**



**standing here?**

Digestor: Fermentor.

**AU: Who are we talking to?**

Digestor: That's Fermentor, he's mute.

Fermentor: [Grumbling].

Cremator: Fermentor only talks with his hands.

Digestor: He's an imbecilic moron.

Cremator: So if you want to know if he loves you or not ask his hands.

**AU: Tell us about the split album you did with Cannabis Corpse.**

Cremator: We did a tour with Cannibis Corpse and they got us so stoned that we forgot to eat them, so in the end we ended up doing a record with them and they sent us a bunch of weed but it turned out it was just a bunch of weed monsters and we had to fight them so Cannabis Corpse is on our shit-list right now. We have enough monsters in Creepsylvania, we don't need weed monsters on top of everything else.

Digestor: Weed monster shit gets all over me. We try and go over the border, cops fuck with us.

**AU: Creepsylvania, what goes on there around Christmas time?**

Cremator: There is actually an answer for this, it's not Krampus, it's Krapus, the Krapus festival. What you have to do, the Krapus comes, and you have to put an orange and some chocolate on your shelf toilet and, I don't know if you know what a shelf toilet is but it's specific to the Teutonic and Eastern countries where people like to smell their shit before they flush it. So you shit on a shelf and it flushes later. For the Krapus, you have to leave an orange and some chocolate otherwise he'll come out of the toilet and eat your asshole which you might like, it's kind of really up to what your game is. Some people like it, they want their salad tossed. Most people put the orange and the chocolate out.

**AU: Can you tell a lot by the smell of the poop?**

Cremator: Yeah, absolutely. It's all down to your health. Mine's really good because I only eat vegetarians.

**AU: Oh, like in the movie Troll 2?**

Cremator: Exactly. I try to keep it healthy and eat lean people. What about you Digestor?

Digestor: I have a sort of pungency to mine, but that's because I do a lot of hard drugs.

**AU: Tell us about the newest record that also turns into a board game.**

Cremator: *Dungeon Bastards* is our newest record and it's all about life on the streets on Creepsylvania and what life is like for Ghoul when you accidentally discover an omicron bomb in your basement and a bunch of people want it. There was a kid back in California who decided to make a board game out of it, and so we stole that from him and didn't pay him anything. We punched him in the face when he asked us to sign a record, because that's what we do. If you ask us to sign a record we might just punch you in the face and then eat you.

**AU: Are the songs inspired by horror movies?**

Cremator: There're no horror movies involved.

Digestor: This is life on the streets of Creepsylvania. This is just the everyday existence of Ghoul written down for prosperity.

**AU: Where exactly is Creepsylvania?**

Cremator: It's really hard to find on a map because it's a really small country. Creepsylvania is a horrible place where we happen to live. We like it because there is a lot of murder and mayhem, so there are a lot of fresh corpses to eat. That's kind of why we stick around, but I wouldn't recommend visiting there. It's pretty crummy, there are a lot of monsters and horror, there is a dictator in charge. It's like, somewhere in Eastern Europe and I'm not even sure you could find it so don't even bother. Just come to our show and we'll let you know what's going on there and give it to you straight from the streets.

**AU: What have you learned being on the road with GWAR?**

Digestor: I've learned, in detail, what Balsac's penis tastes like, and smells like. I wouldn't recommend it, let's just say that.

**AU: I tried to put on Beefcake's helmet one time and I almost vomited because it's just so rank and stank.**

Cremator: Yeah, but you should try tasting their dicks, it's in the contract. It's a pretty good tour but I'm not sure this contract we signed was so good.

Digestor: If you want to go on tour with GWAR, you're going to end up sucking monster dicks and that's the bottom line, people.

**AU: What was the name of the guy who came out at the end of your show?**

Cremator: That was a horrible monster from another dimension who is a toxic waste golem. His name is Abominox. He's a fucking jerk and he wants to destroy all of humanity. Frankly, I've kind of given up going on tour, especially in Canada where everyone is worth destroying. I'm like, I don't care, just do it. Destroy these Canadians, they're a bit thick. Just let them go, we're done.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans?**

Cremator: Tim Hortons needs to serve breakfast all day.

Digestor: Agreed.

**AU: Where do we find you online?**

Cremator: [www.creepsylvania.com](http://www.creepsylvania.com) where we've hacked into the country's website and mostly display band shit. [Facebook.com/ghoulofficial](https://www.facebook.com/ghoulofficial), [twitter.com/ghoulofficial](https://twitter.com/ghoulofficial), [instagram is ghoulofficial](https://www.instagram.com/ghoulofficial), [MySpace is ghoulofficial](https://www.myspace.com/ghoulofficial), [Friendster is ghoulofficial](https://www.friendster.com/ghoulofficial), [Yahoo Groups.](https://www.yahoo.com/groups/ghoulofficial)

**AU: Who are all these Ghoul unofficial motherfuckers?!**

Cremator: A bunch of poseurs, lamers. Lame ass motherfuckers, they don't eat real corpses like we do.

Digestor: They suck.

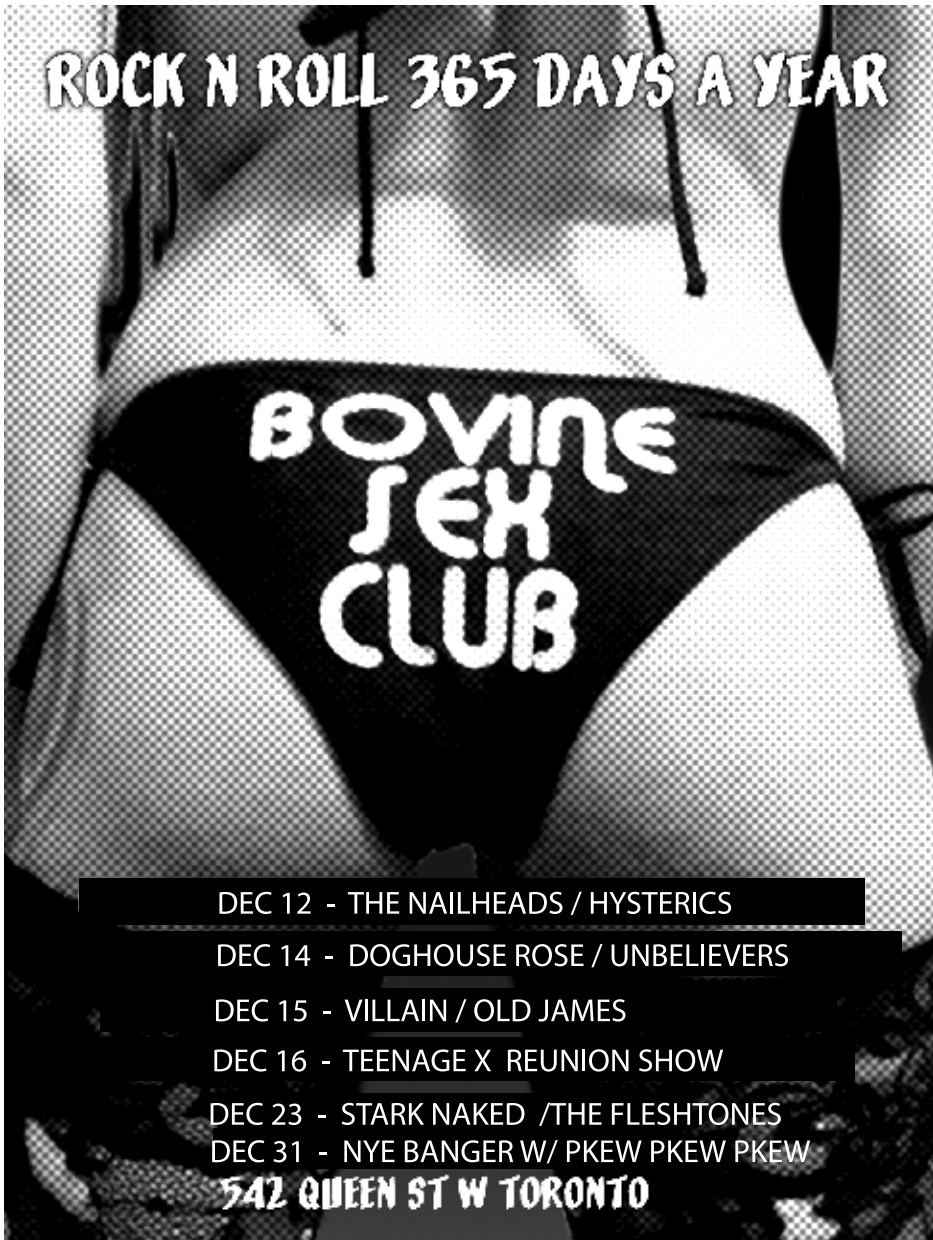
**AU: What record label are you guys on?**

Cremator: We deal with Tankcrimes Records. We have a good deal where he basically supplies us with a bunch of drugs and we don't kill him.

[www.creepsylvania.com](http://www.creepsylvania.com)

[www.tankcrimes.com](http://www.tankcrimes.com)

PHOTO SOURCE: [creepsylvania.com/](http://creepsylvania.com/)



DEC 12 - THE NAILHEADS / HYSTERICs

DEC 14 - DOGHOUSE ROSE / UNBELIEVERS

DEC 15 - VILLAIN / OLD JAMES

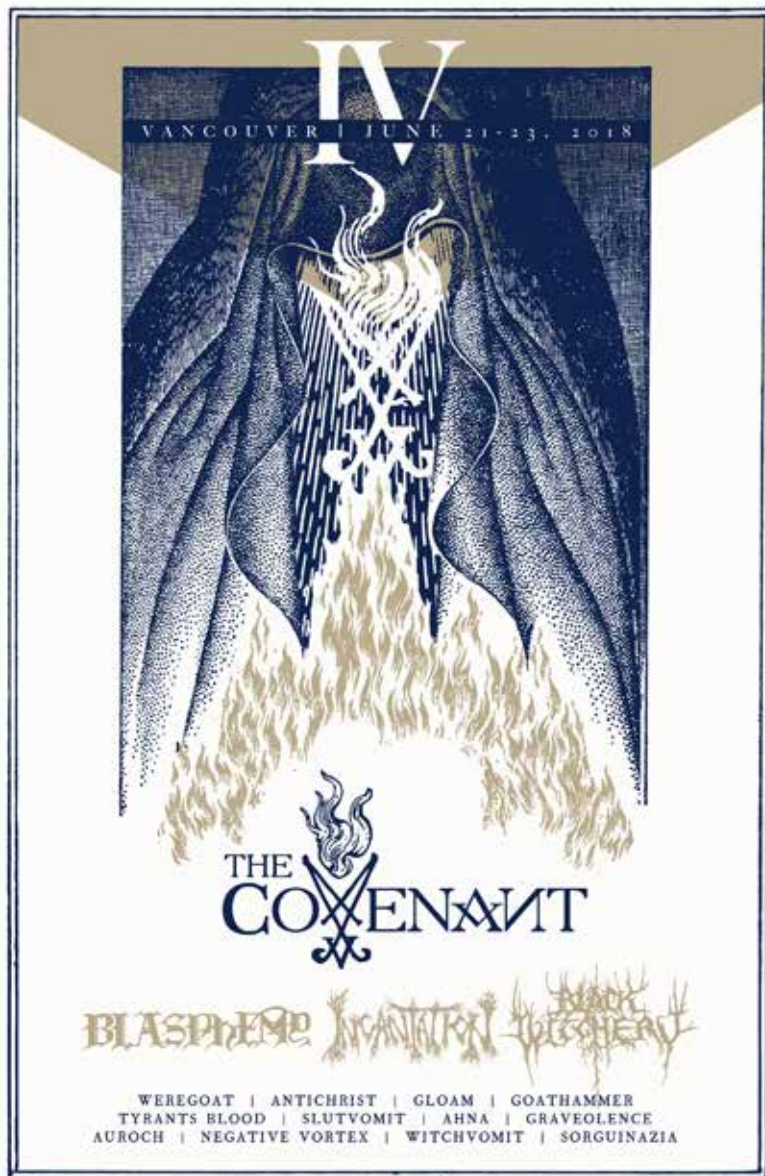
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# SLOW

Interview with lead singer Tom Anselmi  
By Jason Lamb

## Absolute Underground: It's been a long time, so why now?

Tom Anselmi: It certainly wasn't the plan, let's put it that way. I had done a reissue with the label Artifact and they did a really nice job. Then leading up to the release someone said "let's do a show!" and I thought no, no chance. But then when we got into a room together, it was not what I expected. It sounded so alive, and I was shocked at how great it was. That led to a whole different attitude towards the thing. It just started looking like something more than just a moment, and started looking like a new beginning. We wrote five songs the first two weeks. We're going in with Dave Ogilvie mid-December, and we're going to maybe record four songs to start and just see how that goes. No computers, tape.

I think that's a big part of it. I mean, rock and roll is at a real impasse right now, and then if you record it with computers, it kind of sucks. When you took rock and roll and added computers, you ended up with Nickelback. What I mean is that it's that kind of super-sanitized version of rock music. You know where everything is kind of grid edited. It's the worst kind of music ever made. For me, rock music had to just die for me to become interested in it again.

## AU: What about punk rock?

Tom: I definitely listen to that. I like that record by Single Mothers, I think it's called *Catholic*



*Girls.* That record is really good. That guy has got something to say, he's got some lyrics. One of the big things is corporations like to try and buy other peoples' creative processes so that they can sell records, and rock is fairly neglected at this point, so you're not exactly getting the brainiacs working on it. You know, that was already happening when we were making the last copyright album. It's just people like "Hey! This is interesting, but how's it going to end up on The Moose, The Bear, The Donkey, or whatever animal is in the middle of Canada. Well, I don't know because I didn't fuckin' make it for that. I have no idea what that even is, and I don't even care.

## AU: Are there plans to do shows beyond Victoria and Vancouver?

Tom: Oh yeah, man. We're making a new record, like we're going to do this.

## AU: What about festivals?

Tom: Yep! I think we're playing Sled Island, I think we're going to play Punk Rock Bowling in Vegas.

## AU: I want to talk more about Slow and its history the infamous Expo 86 show.

Tom: You know I just heard a recording from it the other day, it sounded quite good. I was actually quite surprised. I mean I hardly remember the gig.

## AU: I was starting to get into punk rock at that time, and I remember hearing about the Expo '86 thing and what I



wanted to ask you is, that whole scene and that show that happened, has kind of become a legend over the years. Looking back on it,

## a very young guy at the time. Did it seem like you were doing something historical?

Tom: Did I think I was doing something historical when I played Expo? I think we know we were doing something that was going to get us a lot of attention. I would consider that it was basically an artistic action. Did I think it was going to become famous? Well I saw it on the cover of the London Times and fuckin' Billboard, and Cashbox, I kind of had an inkling. Yeah, this is kind of big news now. All the media camped outside of our jam space, my mom was crying her eyes out. It was definitely obvious that it was historic. I mean, I was really happy about it because they had to take the fuckin' news off and they put on *Rock N Roll Highschool*. That just proves that God wanted it to happen. They were shaking the pavilion where CTV was doing the news. Just in general though, I think it was a different time. It was an innocent time. There was this moment, it was just at the beginning of the commercialization of punk rock and of "alternative music." We were getting invited to be brought into a lot of stuff, because really all of our influences from Vancouver were done with it for the most part. I guess DOA were still touring, but you know it was really, it was a time where mainstream places, clubs, etc were going, hey you know, we need to start incorporating some of the stuff the kids are getting into to stay relevant. That meant The Grapes of Wrath, Go For 3!, all these kinds of bands that were a lot more benign than we were. We always saw that as an opportunity in those moments, so those kinds of shows were always happening. There wasn't a lot of finesse in it, but people liked it. People enjoyed seeing the singer dragged off the stage by his hair by some angry Nazi bouncer. They liked that.

## AU: The reputation that Slow had back in the day, with all these crazy shows, and out of control, the dragging of the police and all that, is there an expectation that you're going to do that now?

Tom: No, I'll be doing that now. If anyone misbehaves at these shows I will be pointing at them and having them ejected by our team of security. No, no, we're adults now. We won't be doing anything like that. We're going to be running a nice, clean show, a tight ship. For one thing, everyone is unshockable at this point anyway. That was something to do then, but it's certainly not something to do now.

## AU: You often read about Slow imploding, is that a word that sums up what happened?

Tom: You know, I don't think so. I think that people have misconception about what it was like to be in a band those days. Being in a band like Slow. They're remember it was like Nirvana

or something, but it's fucking hard. You're not making any money, touring, playing to no one, sleeping on peoples' floors. It's a fucking drag, you know? It's not fun, even when you're 18. Lots of drugs and alcohol, lots of just really rough times. We went to Toronto, we played one big show, and then our whole tour fell apart. Also for myself, I wanted to do something more complicated. I wanted to do something progressive. I've always done that, abandoned an idea right when it might have started to make me a little bit of money. Time and time again. That being said, now here we are and I honestly think this is going to be tremendously successful right now because it's fucking amazing and nobody can do it anymore, and we can. There is a hole in the marketplace, and I think it's a Slow-sized hole. People want it, they want rock and roll. What is being sold to them as rock n roll is not really rock n roll. It's not loose music, rock and roll music is loose. It's partly improvised, it's got feel. Rock and roll is about people playing together and exploring spontaneous energy, and freeing themselves from every fucking part of life that is about restrictions.

## AU: Are you comfortable with this notion that Slow is the catalyst that started Grunge in Seattle?

Tom: I don't know man. Listen, I'm just going to say this, do I think that Slow started grunge? No fucking way, that is not true. For one thing, I never listened to a Led Zeppelin record on purpose in my life. To me, grunge is a lot about Led Zeppelin. Nirvana is different, but that early Seattle stuff, there is a lot of Led Zeppelin involved. And you know, we were not into that. We were always a rock and roll band. Second thing is that, is there some truth to it? Yes there is because, I can tell you this, when Green River were opening for us they were fucking looking very slick. I remember the bass player had this special part of his t-shirt



cut out so that his nipple, which had a nipple ring on it, shone though. They were very pretty looking, and they had a very large bunch of female fans doing their fuckin' makeup and all that shit. And I can tell you that after they opened for us, and after that whole thing fell apart, I can tell you there was a lot more sloppy, weird flannel being worn than when we were doing it. But we didn't get it from anyone. We didn't invent it, we got it from our moms and our dads. It was a Vancouver thing. We were kind of the most famous example of it, but most bands we were playing with dressed like grease ball rocker people. It was kind of funny to us to dress like that. I would say on a fashion level we had an effect, but on a music level? I don't know, do you hear it?

## AU: That's a good question because Slow didn't really sound like anything else.

Tom: I agree it didn't really sound like anything else. It still doesn't sounds like anything else. It's true, it's a pretty unique sounding band. It has a very wide range of influences, and a rejection of other influences.

Photo Credit: Bev Davies

[slow.bandcamp.com](http://slow.bandcamp.com)

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## Tristan Costa

Interview by Brayden Turenne

Vancouver seems to be veritable breeding ground for varied and immensely talented artistic minds. Drawing people from all corners of the world, the city now stands as a monument to diverse culture, thinking, and ability. Yet, even in such an environment, there is still a great many who have flown under the radar of the public consciousness, working their craft in the shadowed secrecy of their homes, honing it to an even finer edge.

Tristan Costa is a visual artist with an eye for visual aesthetic that few among the masses can claim; he has thus far worked to expand a growing and colourful portfolio that is both a product and instigator of inspiration.

On a rainy afternoon in a regular coffee shop, Tristan sat down to speak with Absolute Underground and touch on a few topics regarding his work.



went to a film academy, but eventually decided that visual design of things is the way I wanted to approach the industry from, because I think that would be a cool way to get into art direction and maybe eventually directing.

**AU: Directing is something you'd want to do?**

TC: Yeah. I'm a huge fan of looking at what film directors do. Like, with David Fincher... I was investigating the way he approaches directing, cinematography and stuff, and that fascinates me.



**Absolute Underground: How did you get started in visual art?**

Tristan Costa: When I was a little kid, I wanted to get into comics, but pretty soon after that, I wanted to get into games or film... sequential imagery. I wanted to do that for the longest time, then I realized I could do that through concept art, which I had a knack for. I was definitely into film, and I

And I like translating that to different mediums, like how film translates to games, and how film and games translate to comics.

**AU: How would you describe your artistic style?**

TC: I've just been experimenting. That's been a good thing and a bad thing for me. People tend to stick to a style, something to recognize you by, and that's definitely something I'm trying to find, but I just get bored and want to adapt to some other

thing... The thing is, every idea can have a totally different approach.

**AU: What would you say about themes in your work? Anything you favour or focus on in particular?**

TC: I think I'm prone to sci-fi. It's just a genre I like, and it's fun to draw. I don't like too much fantasy, and I don't like too much real life, so it's kind of like a nice blend between them. [In terms

of inspiration], the stuff I like is stuff like, *Black Mirror*, where it's fairly realistic, just with some oddness. What sci-fi means is guessing [about] the future. It's very grounded and you can see where they're coming from.

**AU: What about your art do you yet strive to improve or perfect in particular?**

TC: Everything. Lighting, colour. [But particularly] a solid style... because, with some artists, you recognize their art no matter what they're doing, and that'd be great.

[www.tristancosta.com](http://www.tristancosta.com)

## ARTIST PROFILE



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# Dead Kennedys

Interview with guitarist East Bay Ray

By Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to, and what are you best known for?**

East Bay Ray: This is East Bay Ray. I'm a guitar player, songwriter, and co-founder of Dead Kennedys. What I'm known for is my very, very unique guitar style, songs like "Holiday in Cambodia," "Moon Over Marin," and "Police Truck."

**AU: Yeah, everyone calls you a punk or hardcore band, but your guitar sound is very surf-influenced. How did that come about?**

EBR: I'm not sure. I grew up in California. I wasn't straight up into surf music, but the teenagers in my neighbourhood were, so I guess I heard it by osmosis. In the 70s, before Dead Kennedy's started, I got into the first guitar player for Pink Floyd, Syd Barrett, and they have an LP called *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* that he's on, and he had an Echo Unit.

I also liked Scotty Moore who played on the early Elvis sun sessions, like "Mystery Train," that's one of my favourite songs. So those two people, Syd Barrett and Scotty Moore, inspired me to go out and buy an Echo Unit, an Echoplex tape echo and I had that even before Dead Kennedys started. When Dead Kennedys started, I used it and things

kind of developed from there.

**AU: What was the original genesis behind Dead Kennedys? What was the scene like then?**

EBR: I was in San Francisco at North Beach seeing a friend do a Cole Porter musical, and there is this club called the Mabuhay Gardens which was basically like the CGBs of San Francisco. So after I went and wandered in there, and there was a band there playing called The Weirdos from Los Angeles and the little hairs on the back of my neck stood on end. Before that the Sex Pistols had played their last show in San Francisco which was broadcast live. They weren't very good, to be honest. It was a rip off so I'm glad I heard it on the radio instead of paying money. Then the Ramones turned up in the underground. Anyways, so I put an ad up in Aquarius record store and local music magazine called *Marin Musician* and that's how Klaus and the singer Jello Biafra answered the ad. So we started writing songs. I had an apartment that had a garage where we used to rehearse. When we started we didn't have a drummer right at the beginning then later we got our drummer Ted.

**AU: Do you have a favourite Dead Kennedys album?**

EBR: My favourite is *Plastic Surgery Disasters* because it has the hardcore punk sound, but it also has the psychedelic sound that I'd heard Syd

Barrett. I like acid rock.

**AU: Is the song "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" even more relevant now with the current political climate in the US?**

EBR: Yes, in a way. That song was really about Nazis within the punk scene but of course it's expanded beyond that. The sentiment is applicable to people outside the punk scene, so it is relevant today, but I think the thing people need to realize is that politics is about power, and power is what changes things any form of government. Screaming and yelling at Nazis or fascists isn't going to do any good. Some protests are good but posting on Facebook is not going to do much, what's going to do something is the election in 2018. People just need to do the boring stuff of getting out the vote and electing candidates that are a little closer to democratic ideals, rather than closer to fascists. One of the problem nowadays is clicktivism. They think if they are on the internet and they click something, or they like something, or sign a petition, they think they've done their politics and that's all they have to do. That is a big mistake. The fascists do not do that, the right wing does not do that. They will go down to the polls and vote, and they'll vote for policy not personality.

**AU: What was the reason behind the band breaking up originally in the mid-80s?**

EBR: The real reason is that it did kind of run its course. I felt that we weren't experimenting with different forms of music, or different forms of politics. One of the things I wanted to do was write a bit about personal politics, like how people treat one another. Change really doesn't come from the top down, it comes from how you treat your family, how you treat your friends, how you treat your coworkers. That's where change comes from, in my view. Jello is a very talented lyric writer, and I loved some of his lines, but he basically couldn't change or expand from what he does, which is basically complain about everything in a very artistic way.

**AU: So you needed more solutions than just complaining about stuff?**

EBR: Yeah, that's a good point. Actually our bass player, Klaus brought up, why don't we do something interesting about something positive, and have solutions.

**AU: What can people expect from your live performance these days?**

EBR: We have very current, relevant comments on society between the songs, and we've also changes the lyrics of some of the songs to be more contemporary. But basically, in my opinion, we are a really, really good rock band. The sound that Klaus, D.H., and I make along with Skip's singing is unique, and if you don't see us now you'll never see it again.

**AU: What are some of the lyrics you've changed?**

EBR: Well for example in "Bleed For Me," I think the original line, "Cowboy Ronnie comes to town," cause Ronald Reagan was president, and Skip changed it to, "Ivana Trump comes to town for fashion week." Subtle changes here and there.

**AU: One of the shows you played at Festerval was an all-ages show. Is playing all-ages shows important to you?**

EBR: Yes, we like to do it but it's getting harder and harder to do because of the finances of the situation. Paying for the hall, and the security, and the PA, and the lights. I don't have any hard and fast rules on that because I think one of the problems with Punk is, where is the Punk Rock Bible? Where is the Punk Rock rulebook? In my mind, and for Dead Kennedys, our thing is you need to think for yourself and not be told what to think.

**AU: I just thought it was cool, because at the end of the show I was like "Holy shit!" all these kids just got to see The Dead Kennedys.**

EBR: It's nice. Somebody's kid got an autograph on the setlist, he was 8 or 9, but he had a mohawk

and it looked like it was his idea, too.

**AU: Where did you discover your current vocalist, Skip? What does he bring to the table?**

EBR: He was in a band here in the East Bay, called The Wynona Ryders. They were on Lookout Records, who brought us Operation Ivy, and Green Day. We tried working on a band for a little bit, but we never got out playing live, and then we decided to try him out. It's worked out really good. Actually, for the last two years he's really stepped up the game in the sense of coming up with new words and lyrics. He's tightened it up and taken it to a whole new level.

**AU: He's like the heel in wrestling, he likes to rile the audience up.**

EBR: It's kind of an insult comic type thing, with a political edge on it. He pushes the audience, but it's done to get people to think.

**AU: Does Klaus Flouride have really good teeth? What is unique about his bass playing?**

EBR: Since we are just guitar, bass, and drums, he actually plays the bass part and then a lot of the times, he'll end up playing more of a rhythm guitar part. So he's kind of holding down two jobs.



**AU: Can you share a good story about your drummer, D.H. Peligro?**

EBR: He lives down in LA and he's been going to acting classes and he got a job doing the voice in an animation film.

His drumming is kind of on the Keith Moon end of the spectrum. A lot of rolls, and stuff. Flashy.

**AU: You guys all have unique nicknames. How did you come up with East Bay Ray?**

EBR: Actually, Klaus gave me that name. I had that ad in that music paper, I put my location as to where I was located, so at the end I had East Bay, and then a period or a semicolon, and then Ray, and then my phone number. So when Klaus called up, he said, "Is this East Bay Ray?"

**AU: Do you have any plans to record new material with Skip?**

EBR: We've discussed it, nothing specific.

**AU: Any chance of a reunion with original vocalist Jello Biafra for a big event like Punk Rock Bowling or something?**

EBR: The problem is, he's a very angry, bitter person and he needs to learn to forgive himself for some issues he has. Klaus, D.H., and I have said yes, and we've had offers for Riot Fest and Coachella but he's kind of a little, I would say, afraid of it. Other bands have had disagreements, but music fans don't really care. It's about the music.

**AU: What does the future hold for Dead Kennedys? More touring?**

EBR: I guess until we fall over.

**AU: Any plans for a Punk Rock Christmas?**

EBR: Not really, I tend to hunker down over the holidays. I have a Blues and Jazz Christmas album with Lighting Hopkins and Louis Armstrong, and then I have a Ventures Christmas record that is really good. That's my Christmas music.

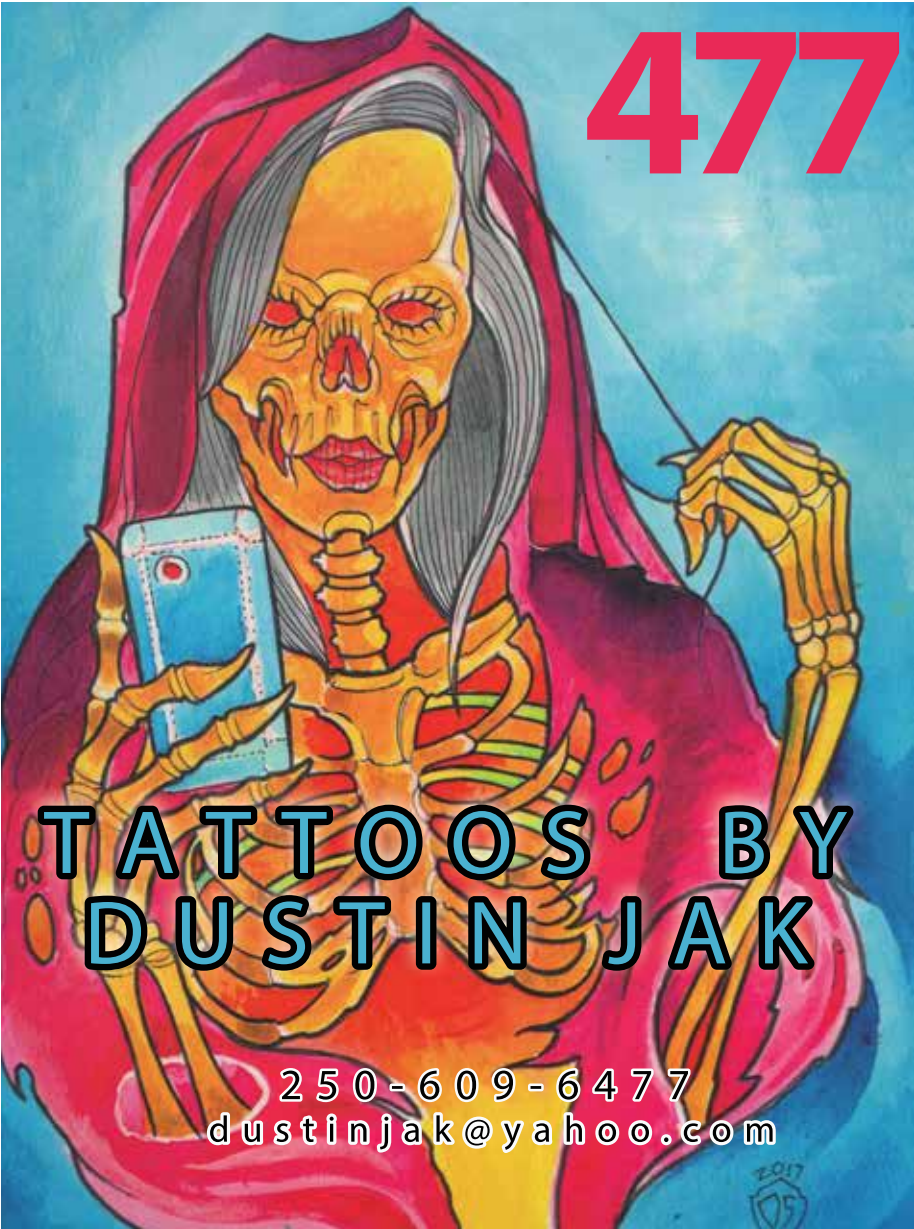
**AU: Is there any Christmas related punk bands in your area? We have one here called the Angry Snowmans.**

EBR: That'd be cool. I'd like to hear some. There is a Dead Kennedys CD where they do a lot of our songs in reggae-dub styles.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans in our igloos up here?**

EBR: Don't do what the United States did. Show up at the polls, and vote for good people.

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**ADAM FARNSWORTH**

**LINDSAY BEAVER** & THE 24TH STREET WALLERS  
**RICH HOPE** & HIS EVIL DOERS  
**KITTY & THE ROOSTER**  
**SATURDAY DEC 2** HALL 8PM

**SUN DEC 3RD LOUNGE 7PM**  
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**WED DEC 6TH** HALL 8PM  
**THE GOOD LOVELIES**

**THURS DEC 7TH** HALL 7PM  
Christmas Concert & Fundraiser  
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**FRI DEC 8TH** HALL 8PM  
**SQUARE DANCE PARTY**  
MONTHLY OLD TIME

**SAT DEC 9TH** HALL 8PM  
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## Subculture Metal Market & Antichristmass XVI

Interview by Roger The Shrubber

**Absolute Underground:** Give us a brief history of the Subculture Metal Market! How long has it been around and what's it all about?

Wendythirteen: Subculture was something I started at Funkys back in Sept 2012, combining art and music. I did about 18 of those bi-monthly for a few years. The Metal Market was started by Kyla Rockingham of Gynosaurus X a few years ago. Antichristmass has been going on for a zillion years, from back from the Cobes days. So the Subculture Metal Market / Antichristmass is kind a fusion of all of that. It emerged in the festive season of 2015.

**AU:** What will set this market apart from others? Any special Antichristmass treats we can look forward to?

Wendythirteen: For those people that get all Christ-massy, we offer oddities of the D.I.Y. ilk from underground artists and small businesses. There is no table rental for the artists and they keep 100% of their proceeds. No fuss. No muss. And I don't need to see your portfolio.

**AU:** Is it true that all items will be under \$50?! Is this a conscious decision by the organizers and vendors?

Wendythirteen: Yes, we're the working poor here. I wanted this to be an opportunity for the artists to be able to sell directly to the customers with no middleman and some possible haggling occurring. It's always nice to know the brainchild and saga of the piece involved.

**AU:** Tell us about some of the vendors we can check out! Any favourites?

Wendythirteen: Rot N Hell is always a favourite. You may know him from his weirdo art cars, but he also paints and is a brilliant illustrator. Tedric Von Solsters

also brings out some killer prints of depravity. Kaos Kult is a D.I.Y. Rock and Occult shop from Langley. Morgan makes rock and roll pillows and battle vests for kids. There's a punkrock zine distro, drinking horns, chain-mail and jewelry. All kinds of cool shit is rolling. Our youngest vendor is Talen, who does killer pins, magnets and prints with rock and roll stylings. He is the son of Gynosaurus X vocalist Destiny and Lemmy impersonator / wrestler, Twan Holliday.

**AU:** What bands will be playing?

Wendythirteen: The Antichristmass part has local hard rockers Lungflower, killer hardcore from Christ Air, Utility Provider are old school dudes, and the ladies from Egypt are Massive Scar Era.

**AU:** What's special about this event? Why should we come down and check it out?

Wendythirteen: This is grassroots artist support. No cliques. No art speak. About the artists and for the artists, and for the people that have eccentrics on their gift giving list, you can find something cool without emptying your wallet.

**AU:** What should we know about Antichristmass that we don't already?

Wendythirteen: Fuck Christ Mass.

**AU:** Where can we find more information, tickets, etc?

Wendythirteen: This is a FREE event for the Market, from 2pm - 7 pm.... The music at 8pm is a normal show. Four local bands for \$10 at the door; it's at Pats Pub in the heart of the D.T.E.S. There will also be some jazz rolling on the stage side of the bar, they have tasty pub food, and you can bring your kids.

**AU:** Any final words for our readers?

Wendythirteen: Come out. I will have a suitcase full of old Cobes crap, too. Saturday December 16th, 2pm - 7pm at Pats Pub. 403 East Hastings. Heavy show after.

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# ANGRY SNOWMANS

## Angry Snowmans

Interview by Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today, and have you been naughty or nice this year?**

Saint Dick: I am Ol' Saint Dick - vocals. A little bit of column A and a little bit of column B.

**AU: Who else is in the band and what is on their Christmas wish list?**

SD: Don Weenow - Guitar; Vodka, G.I. Joes and a nap. Mr. Coalfire - Guitar; A selection of salts including rock, sea, and bath. Jeff B. Jingle - Bass; More bells, fireworks, and socks. Elise Navidad - Bells & Vocals; A nice cheese platter and some kittens. Boughs of Pauly - Drums; A new record player that plays at the correct speed. Mine sucks.

**AU: What was the genesis of the Angry Snowmans band?**

SD: I discovered "Christmas Punk" in 1996 with a pair of releases. Showcase Showdown's *Merry Christmas, I Fucked Your Snowman* b/w Ho-Ho-Ho Chi Mihn 7" and The Vandals' *Oi! To The World* CD. It was hilarious and so much fun to have some of my own music to play during the holidays. I discovered The Yobs, and set about trying to collect as many Christmas punk songs that I could find. The next logical step was to create a Christmas punk band. I worked on the idea on my own for years trying to figure out the best

way to go about. In the end, I decided to incorporate my love of parody into it. My sales pitch for convincing my friends to play on this was usually, "It's like Manic Hispanic, but about Christmas instead of about being Mexican." In 2008 I finally convinced the right combination of people to try it out. It was a lot of fun, and people seemed to really like it. In 2009, Elise joined on bells and vocals. Since then, we have managed to release three full length albums, two EPs, and a split single with Poison Idea. We usually

play shows in Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle and sometimes Portland, but in 2011 we managed to do a mini-tour of Southern California. In 2015 our bass player Misty Mistletoe left to start her own gingerbread family, so Jeff B. Jingle stepped in. Here we are. Pretty much ten years of festive ridiculousness.

**AU: What is the premise and themes you adhere to?**

SD: We have always stuck with the idea that Christmas shouldn't be about mass consumerism or religious nonsense. It's all about getting together with the people you care about and having fun. Eating good food and drinking way too much booze. We often write songs from the point of view of the elves being oppressed by Santa but we don't limit it to that. Anything that is stereotypically Christmas is fair game to be written about.

**AU: Take us through your discography and highlight some classic tracks from each album.**

*Angry Snowmans* (2009) - Our first album. Some of our most classic tunes came from this one. "Elves of The North Pole" ("Kids of The Black Hole," by Adolescents), "Ebenezer Uber Alles" ("California Uber Alles" by Dead Kennedys)... I wish we didn't get so drunk when we recorded it, as there are a lot of cringey mistakes that bug me.

*What We Do Is Festive* (2011) - The sophomore outing. We had it dialed in on the recording front, and it was our first release on vinyl. My favourites from this one would be "Horror Christmas" ("Horror Business," by Misfits), "Wrecked Xmas," ("Los Angeles," by X), "Joyeux Again" ("Jealous Again," by Black Flag) and "Fast Reindeer"

("Gas Chamber," by Angry Samoans).

*Black Coal For Rotten Children* (2013) - Back to CD on this one as vinyl is pricey! Another solid batch of tunes with standouts like "I Turned Into A Nutcracker" ("I Turned Into A Martian," by Misfits), "Toblerone Addict" ("Orgasm Addict," by Buzzcocks), "Trimming The Tree" ("Melody Lee," by The Damned) and "We're Only Gonna Buy (For Our Own Christmas List)" ("We're Only Gonna Die," by Bad Religion)

Jukebox Records' December 7" of the month (2013) - These songs were recorded at the same time as the *Black Coal* album. Our pal Dave Eck from Lucky Lacquers (who masters all of our vinyl releases) was running a "Single of the Month" club and asked Angry Snowmans to be the December record. All four songs are favourites of mine, though we currently don't play any of them live. "You Drive The Sleigh (You Jolly Fella)" ("You Drive Me Ape (You Big Gorilla)," by The Dickies), "Gingerbread Home" ("Suburban Home," by Descendents), "Naughty or Nice" ("Suspect Device," by Stiff Little Fingers) and "Is There A Present There For Me?" ("The American In Me," by The Avengers).

Split 7" with Poison Idea (2014) - We took on PI's classic "Plastic Bomb" and it became "Sugar Plum." Always a crowd favourite!

*What Makes An Elf Build Toys?* EP (2015) - We decided to bang out a six song ripper with no songs over two minutes long. It wound up just selling digitally on our Bandcamp page. Maybe it will wind up on a vinyl release some day. I am partial to "Bing Crosby Wrote Festive Christmas Songs" ("Bob Dylan Wrote Propaganda Songs," by Minutemen), "Naughty Children Suck" ("Crippled Children Suck," by The Meatmen) and "Sleigh Ride" ("Steak Knife," by Angry Samoans).

**AU: Is there a new album coming out in time for X-Mas?**

SD: Sadly not this year. 2017 was a bit of a shitshow in general, so we weren't able to get it together to record any new material. The plan is for a brand new full length to come out in time for our official ten year anniversary. This year is technically the tenth year of doing shows, but it looks better when it says 2008-2018. We have several new songs that are going to be in the live set this year, including one which just may be the best set of Angry Snowmans lyrics I have ever written.

**AU: What's your beef with Santa?**

SD: He needs to ease up on the slave labor up there. Elves and reindeer need to unionize and get what's theirs.

**AU: How did you end up working with Poison Idea on the split 7-inch record you released?**



**Poison Idea is not the first band that comes to mind when one thinks about Christmas songs.**

AU: It all came together thanks to Mark Rainey of TKO Records. He was a Snowmans fan early on and really helped us out with some logistics on our California trip. We had recorded "Sugar Plum," along with the rest of the tracks for *Black Coal For Rotten Children*. I sent it to him to hear because I knew how much he digs PI, and was currently working with them to reissue their back catalog. He loved it, and Jerry A. loved it so Mark came up with an idea to do the split. It also fit into his plans to reissue all of the PI stuff since their song on the split was originally from a single back in the late 80s or early 90s. I still can't believe it really happened!

**AU: What gigs do you have planned for this holiday season?**

SD: It's going to be our usual run this year. Vancouver at SBC on December 8th, Seattle at The Highline on December 9th and Victoria at Logan's on December 16th. We are hoping to go further south next year in conjunction with our tenth anniversary celebration.

**AU: What songs do you still plan to Christmasify in the future?**

SD: We have a list of potential songs about a 100 or so deep. Usually, I'll come up with a title first then see if we can fit some funny lyrics into it. We have upcoming songs by Dead Kennedys, Agent Orange, Sex Pistols, Suicidal Tendencies, Cock Sparrer, and Hüsker Dü among others.

**AU: Why is this the most wonderful time of the year?**

SD: It's the only time of year that you can get a Toblerone and a mandarin orange in a sock on your hearth.

**AU: Final words for the little children of the world?**

SD: Put, Put, Put your lights up!

[angrYSnowmans.bandcamp.com/](http://angrYSnowmans.bandcamp.com/)  
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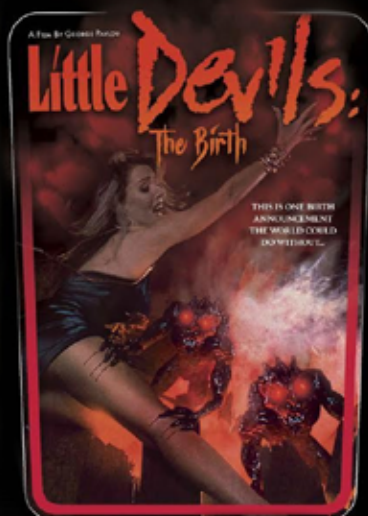


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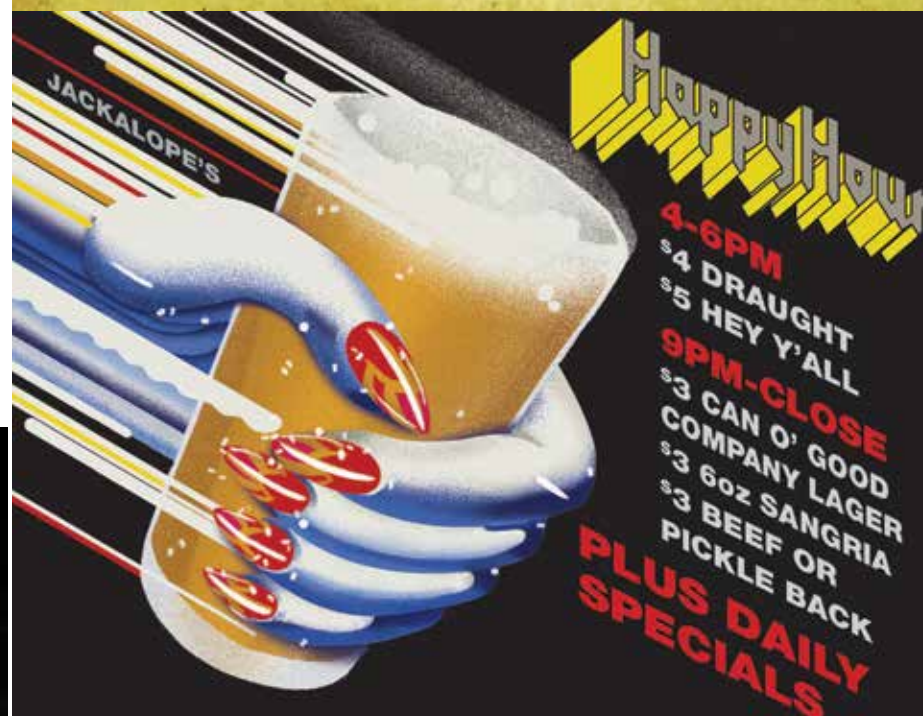
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tablespoons cornstarch 1/4 teaspoon fine  
salt

**Wet:** 2 1/4 cups milk 3 large egg yolks,  
lightly beaten 3 tablespoons unsalted butter,  
cut into small pieces 2 teaspoons vanilla  
extract

### Directions:

1. Pour Milk and sugar into Sauce Pan  
- Set on Medium Heat  
- Stir often to avoid burning milk.

2. In a separate bowl put egg yolks, vanilla  
extract, cornstarch, and salt and mix well.  
This is now a yolk paste.

3. Once Milk is quite warm to touch pour  
1/4 into yolk paste and mix until all is  
dissolved. Then pour the paste back into  
sauce pan.

4. All ingredients are now in sauce pan.  
Continue to heat until a light boil has  
started while constantly mixing. You will  
see mix begin to thicken.

5. When mixture starts to turn thick,  
remove from heat, mix for a few minutes.  
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## Danger Boys: Punks in Osaka

By Ed Sum

Murahachibu and Zuno Keisatsu are two Japanese punk rock bands who helped form punk rock music scene during the 70s. Discovering what works for and exists to music listeners interested in this part of the world has been described as difficult by some music journalists. The live music scene, according to a 2014 article in the *Japan Times*, is "...notoriously difficult to penetrate. What's there is said to be tucked away in the basements and upper floors of anonymous buildings, often in seedy parts of town, where the neighbours will be less likely to raise complaints against noise and loitering, with websites that update schedules only a few days before the actual events and that rarely link to any of the artists performing, live venues are like a hidden world open only to those who know the secret handshake."

Seattle-based pseudo-punk band Tennis Pro entered this realm when they hit the road less travelled to gain recognition in their documentary *Big in Japan* (2014), but to penetrate Japan's current scene, a world buried in another one, is just as tough to uncover. Enter *Danger Boys: Punks in Osaka*, a documentary by Nick Romi (director) which is set for release December 11, 2017. This video can be pre-ordered at foreverunholystore, bigcartel.com and early birds will get a limited edition poster for \$10. This video will also be available on select streaming video services on the same day.

The work-in-progress print I got to preview looks at a small part of this genre's influence in the land of the rising sun. Names like Kaoru Merde Hayata from Flat Sucks discuss where the music is headed. He says the punk rock scene was really hot in the 80s and reveals the music his group plays is all about emotion. His insights stand out in this documentary and he talks a little about his band's music video "Ohirune" from their album *Osoru Osoru*. The visuals make for a great look at an atypical life in a Japanese household, and when contrasted with the edgier parts of the video, it makes for some obvious statements. Though my understanding of the language is limited, I got the sense of thinking this song is extolling the need to bust out of complacency.

Also included are brief thoughts and full

performances from the bands SK8NIKS, Pipi, CW and Bypass. The emphasis in this documentary is to spotlight the bands, rather than providing a complete historical discourse. Not all of them have an online presence, so you have to attend their shows. A study can be made about the entertainment scene that's unique to this metropolis and that is best left to scholars than documentarians. Examining the reverence of this city's past is gently covered, since it comes through in the arts scene. The fact that Osaka is an economic hub for the entire country and is known as "the nation's kitchen" makes for a perfect milieu for punkers to emerge from.

Hayata says the local scene is very manly. There are more male bands in Osaka than female. In a wider perspective, a fair number of female groups do exist, but they are scattered across the country. They do not outnumber the crazy number of



J-pop performers which dominates the general music scene, but maybe one day the numbers will increase.

When recalling the influence the punk sound has on anime, there is a favourite title this author fondly recalls. *Furi Kuri* is a crazy original video series which uses the punk aesthetic to entertain; Cartoon Network Toonami announced a sequel is in the works (set for 2018 release) and Japanese studio Production I.G. will be producing.

This documentary ends with a lengthy performance by TokoTokoTonntoko after the credits. This band blends J-pop sounds with punk, and this segment which will no doubt be a video extra.

Further edits are expected before this title's eventual release. I hoped to see subtitles on the songs, so I could understand what's being sung, and the producers of the *Danger Boys* team at Unholy Spirit Productions plan on it. The initial cut clocks in on the short side, running about 35 minutes, and I wished for more. Perhaps further material will be added. I enjoyed watching a song performed in its entirety. I wanted to hear more from record label producers, but in a scene where you have to be at those basement juke joints, they are not always there to be interviewed. Perhaps with this video, these bands will see further recognition they all truly deserve.

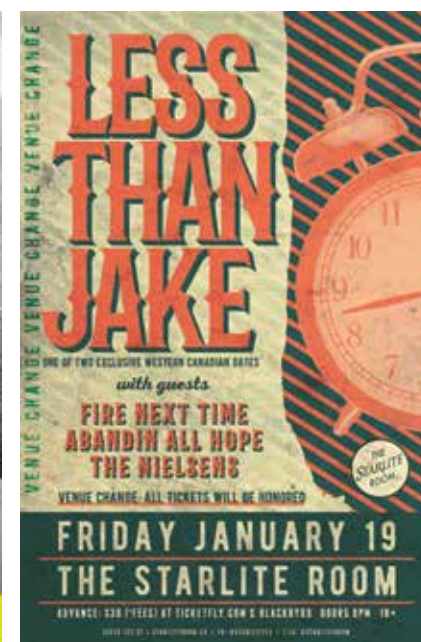
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# The Smugglers

Interview with frontman Grant Lawrence  
By Ira Hunter  
Transcribed by Adam VanThiel

**Absolute Underground: Who are you what are you most famous/infamous for?**  
Grant Lawrence: My name is Grant Lawrence, and I'm most infamous for being the singer for the Vancouver rock and roll band The Smugglers. I'm also an author, and I've worked for CBC Radio for many years.  
**AU: What is the origin of The Smugglers?**  
GL: Well, we formed in 1988, we really wanted to be sort of a 60s-style garage band. We went to see a band called The Gruesomes, they were kind of a blend of really

traditional 60s garage rock, Beatlemania and the Ramones, and I thought they we really like the perfect band. I wasn't really into any of the current music of the 80s, and I really just loved music from the 60s and 70s, so that was really like the impetus of the band.  
**AU: And was that the show you snuck into with Nardwuar?**  
GL: Yeah that's right, I snuck in to that show. I have this belief that anyone who's into music has some kind of game-changing, life changing moment, for better or worse, when you find a band that makes you feel like this is it, I have arrived, I am home with my people. The clubs were 19+, so when I was 16, I grew a really patchy disgusting beard, and I think Nardwuar was still too young as well, but he had a fake ID, and we got in and it was an amazing night. The club was painted black and smelled like cigarettes, beer and urinal cakes, and you could right up close to the band. It was just like the most exciting thing I have ever done in my life. After that, I just knew this is what I wanted to do.  
**AU: Do you have any advice for sneaking into a show? I know you shared some good techniques during your book reading.**  
GL: There are all sorts of methods for getting into a show. We pulled some really, really brazen ones when we were kids, like at soundcheck, most venues were wide open, there's nobody usually except the sound man and the crew, so you could just walk in easily during soundcheck and hide like under a booth or table or something. I would hide somewhere for hours and hours waiting for shows. I remember one of the really brazen ways was to call the club we wanted to go to and pretend we were the musicians playing that night, and get them to add our names to the guest list. Another way we would do it, we would pretend to be in the band, carrying like guitar cases and using Jedi mind tricks, and real confidence, and if anyone every stopped us we would be like, "Hey man, what's your problem, we're playing tonight."  
**AU: And then you started putting beer in the guitar cases?**  
GL: Yeah, once the guitar case method started working, we though why not fill them with beer and save money instead of buying "imported" beer inside. So we took the

guitars out and filled the cases of with beer.  
**AU: Tell us about the recent show at the Commodore and the book launch.**  
GL: Oh that was a really amazing event, and we never expected to play, period. We broke up in 2004 and we thought, "Okay well that's it, it was fun." Then we sort of went our separate ways. But once I started writing the book, interesting things started to happen. The Smugglers started percolating again, and we played a show in Berkeley, California for the 30th anniversary of 924 Gilman, a punk club we used to play all the time, and that show went really well, and so we thought, "Gee maybe when the book comes out, we'll play in Vancouver." One of my friends, Aaron Chapman, from the Commodore Ballroom called me and said, "I heard a rumour the The Smugglers are going to do a show in Vancouver." I said maybe, and he said, "Well you have to do it at the Commodore." I said no, it was too big... The Smugglers headlined the Commodore once at the height of our popularity back at the CD release party for *Rosie*. So I just said, "No, it's crazy, we aren't gonna do it," but he just kept on trying to convince me. So I said, "Well can I stack the bill with bands I know, or have played with?" He said sure. So we just built up the show. Whats funny is, I got one band right away, Chixdiggitt, but I didn't know who else to ask, I just put it out there on Facebook and Ronnie for The Muffs, who's been my good friend for over 20 years said they'd play. I don't even know if I would have asked them, because I feel like they should headline over us in any city in the world, so it was a huge honour for us. The actual show was really great too, we had over 1000 people show up, and there was great energy from everyone.  
**AU: What is the premise of the book?**  
GL: The book is called *Dirty Windshields*, the best and the worst of the Smugglers tour diaries, so essentially once we got our act together, the band started touring Canada right away, and we would go drive really long distances to play, until we realized Calgary is 12 hours away and Seattle is only two or three hours away, so why aren't we going down there? So the book is about the tour diaries I kept from those years of touring, and the further we toured the more diaries I kept. I kept them the whole time, and finally 13 years after the band ceased, I got it together into a book and published them.  
**AU: Is everything in there, all the dirt? Or were there some stories that were too raunchy?**  
GL: Oh yeah there is a lot of really raunchy stuff that got left out, but there is still a lot in the book, I'll tell you one, one of them. Do you remember a show called *Family Matters*? It starred Steve Urkel. We were travelling when we were doing really well, and we were on stage looking cool and after the show these two punk rock girls asked

us if we wanted to stay at their apartment, and we said yes. Me and one of the roommates, this punk rock girl with pink spiky hair started getting it on right there on the couch in front of everyone, and but the lights were pretty low, because everyone was watching *Breakfast Club* at like one in the morning, but people starting noticing and slowly each person left the room till we were alone. So we had this great night together, but the next morning, we were loading to go to the next show, and I was dressed in like a Clark Kent situation, different from the stage outfits, I get on my thick buddy holly glasses, and the only clean pants I had, which were this awful green plaid, and it was chilly so I put on this little red cardigan and a button down shirt, and I was leaving so I give this girl a little kiss on the cheek, and went to the parking lot. Our roadie did this thing called an idiot check, so he goes back into the apartment and he looks in every room to make sure we had everything. As he is doing this, the girl with pink hair is standing with her roommate looking down at me in the parking lot, and she turns to her roommate and says, "I think I just fucked Urkel." So that's an example of a story my editor wouldn't let me put in the book.  
**AU: Will there be any more Smugglers shows?**  
GL: Yeah, we're doing a show on Friday June 16th in Toronto at the Horseshoe Tavern, and one at the Ottawa Explosion Festival the night after. Those are the only two, we might play in New York, but we'll see. There will only be five reunion shows in total.  
**AU: Final words for Canadian music fans?**  
GL: I know that there are a couple of generations that grew up without the Smugglers, especially being on Radio 3, a lot of people didn't know about the Smugglers, it was sort of just another era of music, and I'm just hoping people, no matter what era of Canadian music they are into, will you know, give The Smugglers a chance, and they might be surprised, because we are a pretty rambunctious high energy rock band. We aren't in the best era for Canadian music right now, I think it was a little healthier five years ago, and much much better ten years ago, but it ebbs and flows like that, so something really great for Canadian music might be just around the corner.

Dirty Windshields - The Best and the Worst of the Smugglers Tour Diaries is available through  
[www.douglas-mcintyre.com/book/dirty-windshields](http://www.douglas-mcintyre.com/book/dirty-windshields)  
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# Absolute Horror

## Curating the Horror Film

### Or, Are We Really Getting Any Love From Netflix Algorithms?

By Vince D'Amato

"Curating" is becoming a sadly scarce term in the world of horror cinema. Distribution has changed, and the once-reliable genre of horror cinema, able to generate huge percentages on ROIs in the VHS, Video Rental, and DVD markets are now relegated to the Halloween-season Netflix releases of highly marketed direct-to-VOD productions like *The Babysitter* and the second season of *Stranger Things*. To be fair, both of these examples are slick, wildly entertaining horror productions, but that's not really what I'm getting at here. What I'm getting at is that now, more than ever, horror cinema has become something of a victim in a you'll-get-to-see-what-we-choose-to-show world of on-demand video streaming, and now, video production as well, as Netflix seems to be becoming a leading studio in media production in North America.

Previously, horror movie aficionados, curious teenagers, and cinephiles in general would be able to take part in the horror movie industry simply by being able to choose the films they wanted to see through the vast array of horror titles in the equally vast array of video stores, the number of which was reaching near-Starbucks proportions in the video rental heyday.



The other side of the coin was the curating of horror films. Video store owners would have to choose, or curate, their own store's collective stock through the distribution companies and studios. Distribution companies curated the horror films they would pick up and distribute. This might all be a loose interpretation of "curating," but the art of this really began to get refined as Anchor Bay Entertainment entered the DVD market in the early 2000s, followed by the likes of Shriek Show, Blue Underground, Image Entertainment, and even Something Weird Video. These were followed by Severin, Darkside Films, and others (like Screaming Factory) which have persevered and managed to remain relevant in bringing us unusual, sought-after cult genre films via hard-copy media even in the on-demand era of genre film distribution. And as the market for these hard-copy horror oddities continually shrinks as video-delivery technology advances, weirdly, the ever-niche talent of horror film curating becomes more honed, specifically with the more boutique-style genre distribution companies like Cult Epics and Mondo Macabro. And this is exactly what I've been ramping up to: the expert curating of these companies, Cult Epics and Mondo Macabro. I'll also include the US DVD distributor Artsploitation Films in this category of rare and talented horror film curators, who incidentally released one of the best independent genre/horror films of all times, *Hidden in the Woods*. And

these three companies absolutely need to be talented – and ballsy – in this disappearing skill of film curating; because if not, then it's back to relying on the on-demand algorithms to bring us our horror cinema.

When I'm on Netflix, I find myself sporadically trying to manipulate the algorithms by watching the first few minutes of any horror film that might have randomly popped up, adding some to my list – and still, because I binge-watched *Breaking Bad*, the titles in my recommendation list are all dramatic TV series or crime-thrillers. Even when I eventually manage to get Netflix to display a horror-genre list, it's listed without any sub-genres and usually at the bottom – and only for a short while before disappearing completely. Now, I do realize this is a "me" problem, and that if I just watched more horror movies on Netflix that they would recommend more horror to me. But then again, what type of horror movies are they commending, and why? The horror they have, like many global VOD aggregators, was acquired through aggressive media-content and "bulk" film acquisitions. The art of curating any genre programming was assuredly not even on the radar. On the flipside, Artsploitation Films, Cult Epics, and Mondo Macabro have gone to consistent efforts to actually hone their film catalogues and to bring horror audiences wildly unique and worthwhile genre films, films that may have remained lost, unseen, unrestored, or untranslated if not for their curating. While I thought Cult Epics may have peaked in the past year with their releases of the German serial-killer epic *Angst* and a collection of feature films from cult director Jorg Buttgerit (*NEKRomantik*, *Schramm*), they managed to pull more impressive tricks from their proverbial hat with their follow-up releases, including the 60s thriller *Obsessions*, the erotic-giallo *Death Laid an Egg*, and the psycho-sexual curio *The Flesh*, which is not a traditional horror movie by any means, but rather an erotic-comedy with brushstrokes of aphrodisiac cuisine, lite vampirism, and cannibalism. Also this year, Mondo Macabro released onto Blu-ray the early K-horror film *Suddenly, in the Dark*, a supernatural and surreal horror-revenge-thriller featuring a horrifying doll that appears to be terrorizing a housewife who suspects her husband of infidelity, and who could also possibly be going completely insane.

*Suddenly in the Dark* is one of those surprise gems, it's a wickedly stylish horror-psycho-thriller that gives the terrorizing-horror-dolls sub-genre a hard run for its money. And also this fall, Mondo Macabro followed up this Blu-ray with another pair of top-tier successive releases: the lost Italian giallo *The Fox with a Velvet Tail* and a masterpiece of Latvian surreal-horror cinema, *Spider*, which has been my favourite of all of the releases this year, it's a bonkers arthouse horror featuring a young artists' model who releases her own

sexual repressions through nightmare landscapes of sex, violence, anxiety, and gigantic spiders. Masterpiece might not actually be the right word for *Spider*, as up until a couple of years ago it was actually the only Latvian horror film to have ever been made. (Now, it's one of two).

The newest of these hard-media distribution companies, Artsploitation Films, has focused on new independent



genre (and horror-heavy) cinema is now releasing the Australian horror movie *Red Christmas*, a Christmas slasher-horror that takes place during the summer-Christmas festivities in a remote Australian home – the film also stars horror icon Dee Wallace (*The Howling*) in a crowd-pleasing go-for-the-gusto matriarchal role to rival her best horror cinema roles. And if you might be into something more in the lines of the classic-cult or retro Christmas horror arena, the



previously-mentioned Mondo Macabro still boasts *Don't Open til Christmas* as part of their wild genre DVD catalogue. *Don't Open til Christmas* was produced by the team behind the more-famous horror-slasher film *Pieces* (Grindhouse Releasing), and is basically a string of impressively executed kills set during the yuletide season, and might be even a little wilder than *Red Christmas*. Both of these horror films are nonetheless one hundred percent worthy of any horror fans' Christmas-horror indulgences, and through which we'll likely get our Christmas-horror fix faster than by waiting for Netflix's algorithms to catch up to our genre tastes, and only then to find out that titles like these are actually unavailable on the popular VOD platform. One can only re-watch *Krampus* so many times. Thank Christmas for companies like Mondo Macabro, Artsploitation, and Cult Epics!

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# Fan Expo Vancouver 2017 Retrospective

Interview by Ed Sum

Fan Expo Vancouver is settling into a groove. Established last year, they are spotlighting the pop culture scene which is part of this city's landscape. This year they brought guests from CW's lineup of comic book-based shows (*Riverdale*, *Arrow*, *The Flash*, *Legends of Tomorrow*, *Supergirl* and *iZombie*) to the event, and the panels held in the main ballroom of the Vancouver Convention Center were regularly packed, as not all attendees are from Vancouver, and set visits are not exactly allowed. Seeing the actors on stage talking about what's to come and the joy they share when performing together offers the audience more than just seeing them at work. Depending on the show, these talents gave some teasers about upcoming events. There was some discussion about the huge crossover event that's to take place within the Arrowverse, but no spoilers were revealed.

Also featured was a panel about an upcoming paranormal drama, *Ghost Wars*, which is hopefully coming to Canadian Netflix soon. For those who managed to get a sneak peak, it's almost impossible to tell this program was filmed in

Vancouver! The Writers Guild of Canada presented the curious audience with a look at what goes on in penning this show, which stars Avan Jogia. He plays Roman Mercer, an outcast with the ability to see spirits. The other side is not kind to the living; answers are demanded, and understanding them requires this protagonist to deal, not only with his fears, but also with a township who are very prejudiced against anything abnormal. Meatloaf also appears in this show as a bitter old man who has to confront the unknown. His brush with ghosts is not limited

to his real-life encounters, but also fictional ones, too!

Even Henry Winkler offered some thought about the paranormal. Although he's better known as The Fonz in *Happy Days*, his importance as a producer and voice-over talent should not be forgotten either. He was executive producer of the 90's news-style program *Sightings*, which seriously looked as the subject. Other programs included *Unexplained Mysteries* (2003). On the fictional front, *Dead Man's Gun* (1997-1998) and

*So Weird* (1999-2001) are classics with their own cult following! Winkler is fully supportive of the programs he is helping to finance and create; he firmly believes there is more out there (beyond our reality) for us to explore, hence his involvement.

On the video game front, Playstation (Sony) offered a jaunt into the paranormal. More virtual reality demos were offered this year to show this medium is making a foothold. Doom VFR will be available on the Steam (for the HTC Vive) and

Playstation 4 platform beginning December 1st. Demon hunters are in for a learning curve because navigating requires looking at a spot and pressing a button on the controller to move there. Instead of walking around, all the controls are point and look to shoot (or move) based.

The highlight of this year's event was getting to see the camaraderie that goes on when these performers are talking about their work. The *iZombie* team and *The Flash* cast were the best represented. Rose McIver, Rahul Kohli, Aly

Michalka, Malcolm Goodwin, and Robert Buckley entertained the audiences with stories from the set. Their panel was fueled by questions from the audience more than from the host. The highlight was with the audience and cast singing Rahul "happy birthday," and he blushed.

This event lives up to what an exposition means. It's hard to say if there were more artists than exhibitors; to see them mixed in-between company tables of local publishers and retailers made exploring the all the aisles a must.

Just how FXV will grow depends on the team who organizes this event. Their goal is to work with the various industries that exist in this metropolis. As

many industry observers know, this city is home to many animation, film effects and television production houses. It's not about Electronic Arts, since their presence is not about spotlighting the work, but recruiting. Eventually, these studios will consider making a presence at this event instead of SPARK Animation Festival, which takes place two weeks prior. There is crossover potential;

perhaps a four-day event can be made to appeal not only to the pop culture enthusiast, but also to those craving a movie spotlight, too!

[fanexpovancouver.com/](http://fanexpovancouver.com/)



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# Absolute Comicgeddon

## Winter Edition

By Ed Sum

The Yuletide is a great time to cozy up to some ghost stories or a work in the tradition of Charles Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*. In this day and age, deciding on what notable classic to warm up with is tough. Even a comic book can do the job, and this year offers a small mix of options that will soon be available in a store near you. These picks can delight and perhaps offer up a little fright!

### Hellboy Krampusnacht

Writer: Mike Mignola

Art & Cover: Adam Hughes

Ships Dec 20

Unlike previous years' specials for the season, this release will offer a one-shot where Hellboy is going up against an alpine creature of Slavic origin. Perhaps that's the reason why Krampus is always grumpy. Two legends will be locking horns in the worst way possible. What makes this story special is that it marks well-known cover artist Adam Hughes' first contribution to this universe.



### Evil Dead 2: Christmas Special & Activity Book

Writers: Georgia Ball, Ian Edginton

Art: Vincenzo Riccardi, Dave Youkovich, House of Imagi (c)

Cover: Dave Youkovich

Ships December 2017

Some kids (okay, big kids) looking for something to do by the fireplace will take to this stocking stuffer. For folks who have not discovered this series which Space Goat Publishing picked up the license to in 2015, fret not! This book reprints *Evil Dead 2: Revenge of Krampus* and *A Merry Deadite Christmas*.

Also offered in this collection are crossword puzzles, connect the dots and illustrations to

colour to all your heart's content. Candy cane-coloured deadites anyone?

### Swamp Thing Winter Special

Writers: Tom King

Art & Cover: Jason Fabok

Ships: Jan 31, 2018

This special square-bound one shot will see Swamp Thing out of his element and facing challenges in an environment where boy and thing have to work together if they are to survive. This antihero is separated from the Green, so his ability to regenerate is not going to save him.

What makes this release a must is a look at what original co-creator Len Wein intended to create as a new series. Sadly, his untimely passing put this project on the shelf. This content will be offered in script form and Kelley Jones is providing some art.



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## Deathmas Festivus

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Joey Hockin: My name is Joey Hockin and I'm the owner/operator of Journeyman Productions. I've been promoting metal shows in Vancouver for close to two years now.

Jason Campbell: Jason, I'm the singer and one of two guitarists for Obsidian.

**AU: Tell us about Deathmas! How did the event come about? Is it replacing Diecemberfest?**

JH: After Diecemberfest was cancelled, Jason Campbell of Obsidian messaged me saying that he was working on reviving the show and asked me to come on board as the promoter. Together with Danielle Royal, we contacted the bands and venue, and put together a new show in place of Diecemberfest. We've all really enjoyed attending and playing Diecemberfest events in the past, so we were all really bummed when the show was cancelled; having the opportunity to put together a show in the same spirit of Diecemberfest was really exciting.

**AU: What are the details, venue, location, dates?**

JH: It'll be at Rickshaw Theatre on December 15th, near the intersection of Main and Hastings. Doors will open at 6pm and bands will start at 7pm.

**AU: What's the lineup like, any bands you're particularly stoked on as an organizer?**

JH: I've been able to work with almost every band on the bill in the past, and I couldn't pick any one band that I'm most excited for. It's obvious that I'd say it as a promoter, but I can honestly say that every single band puts on a killer show. If anyone shows up late and misses any of the bands they'll be seriously missing out!

JC: Terrifier and Unbeheld are tops on my list!

**AU: What can we expect from the Deathmass experience? Why should we attend this event?**

JH: Diecemberfest in the past has always been more than a show; it's a gathering of the metal community and a celebration of all the amazing talent that we have in Vancouver. It's also one of the last shows of the year, shows usually slow down for a few weeks after Christmas, so if you're as much of a show junkie as I am, you're gonna want to show up!

**AU: Do you hope to make this an annual event? Any goals for future years?**

JH: We haven't decided if we're going to keep this event going, we're just focused on making this one as big as we can! If you want to see more of these events happen in the coming years, then let us know!



**AU: What should we know about Deathmass that we don't already?**

JH: It'll be a charity event for the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. These are tough times in Vancouver for a lot of people, and this is a cause that everyone can get behind. On top of making a cash donation with proceeds from the event, we'll be collecting non-perishable food items to keep food on the shelves at the food bank.

**AU: Where can we find more information, tickets, etc?**

JH: The full lineup and details are posted on the Facebook event and advance tickets are available on Ticketfly for only ten bucks!

**AU: Any final words for potential attendees?**

JC: Don't miss this show, this will be one you'll be telling friends, family and grandchildren years down the road, "I attended this Deathmas show and my mind was blown!"

JH: If you haven't been checking out many local shows in Vancouver, this is a good chance to see what you've been missing out on. The amount of talent in this city is honestly unreal and as a fan I'm more excited for this show than 90% of the tours that come through. If you're on the fence about coming, we really hope you make the decision to come out, have a great time, and help make the holiday season a little more cheery for those less fortunate!

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## Menace

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?**

Finn Panton: Finn Panton. What story do you want?

**AU: The story of how you almost made it to the show tonight.**

FP: Well yes, we went across the Rockies. We left at 5 o'clock this morning from Calgary but the ferry was shut down because of the wind. But why didn't we go to the other ferry? Because our driver was fucked in the head..

**AU: If this bar had been open 'til two in the morning, everything would have been fine.**

FP: Yes, absolutely. What's all that about?

**AU: How long have you been with the band?**

FP: Third longest member of Menace ever, which is a long time.

**AU: You guys are so punk rock, you don't even have a Wikipedia...**

FP: That's right. Funny, isn't it? We're still underground, forty years later.

**AU: What year did you start playing?**

FP: 40 years. Not with Menace, I was doing punk in '77. Public Heirs in '77, we were on the south coast so we saw the real beginning of punk. Fantastic. Just the feeling, the buzz, the craziness

of gigs, this is all tame now, in comparison. It's become acceptable.

**AU: What brought about these four shows in Canada?**

FP: It's a wonderful thing to do, isn't it? Spread the underground word, and the travelling as well. We've seen The Rockies, Lake Louise, things we thought we'd never do, to be honest.

**AU: What bands were around back in the day?**

FP: Well on the south coast was The Piranhas, Public Heirs, which was us, Peter and the Test Tube Babies, and that was about it, on the south coast. Then of course we all moved up to London and split up, because '79 had come around and we were thinking, is that it? '76-'79, is that it?

**AU: Now who are we talking to?**

Noel Martin: This is Noel Martin, the only original guy left in the band, unfortunately.

**AU: What happened to the original singer?**

NM: Morgan Webster. He died in 1991. He was from Toronto originally, he was probably one of the first Canadian punk rockers because he was in London when it started. I recently I found out, that he came off his bike and injured his head.

**AU: Punk rockers, never wearing their helmets.**

NM: Morgan didn't need one, he had a hard head! We had two Canadians in the band, in the beginning. Charlie's half and half, Charlie was born in Ireland but his mother's Canadian.

**AU: Which one's Charlie?**

NM: He was the bass player. He's still around, and plays with us very occasionally, but he's got a repetitive strain injury in his hand.

**AU: We were really stoked to see this, '77 UK punk coming to Logan's Pub in Victoria, BC.**

NM: Well we started in '76 as opposed to '77. We put out our first album in '79, but we started in September '76.

**AU: What were the highlights of your career back in the early days?**

NM: It was seeing your posters on the wall, when you released your first record. I mean for us, when

*Screwed Up* came out, there were these huge posters on the walls, they were all over London. We'd be going down to the gigs on the bus and Menace posters were everywhere, we thought we'd made it big time. We hadn't but.. it was a real moment.

**AU: What were some of your biggest songs?**

FP: Well "G.L.C." is the biggest song.

**AU: What does it stand for?**

FP: It stands for "Greater London Council," G.L.C. It was about them banning punk gigs in 1977. Conservative government led by a guy called Horace Cutler. He's dead now.

NM: He's dead and we're alive, still kicking, playing "G.L.C."

FP: There was one particular gig that actually sparked it, it was the first punk festival at Charlton Athletic Football ground, and that was banned by the GLC, so it was after that we came up with G.L.C. you're full of shit.

**AU: I like your song "Civilized."**

FP: The thing about "Civilized" is, it's one of those punk songs written at the time, absolutely on the mark, isn't it? It captures everything that was around then. The thing is, you question it. It's not saying we're civilized, we're questioning it. Are you civilized? When all this shit is happening, and you're allowing it to happen, and you're not protesting, are you civilized? When you carry a gun, are you civilized?

**AU: So what have you liked about Canada so far?**

NM: I tell you what, for me, the most outstanding thing is the people. Everybody, without one exception, have been so hospitable, and so helpful and so willing and so into it. It's been brilliant, it's been a real pleasure.

FP: I have to say, we drove through the Rockies today and that was like, wow. God's hands, if you believe in God. But that was quite staggering, to see that.

**AU: What songs did people miss tonight?**

NM: They missed "Civilized", "Screwed Up", "C & A", "Electrocutioner", "Live for Today", "Last Year's Youth", "The Young Ones", we have quite a few

classics.

**AU: How albums does Menace have?**

NM: Six. They are available from Randle Records in Germany, the new album, which is *London Stories*, but the good news is it's coming out in the States, on Violation Records.

**AU: You should get ahold of Punk Rock Bowling in Vegas because they always bring old bands in to play.**

NM: We've considered it but we were a bit worried about the heat in Vegas, we couldn't cope with the heat.

**AU: Cock Sparrer can!**

FP: Yeah but they're English and I'm Irish. I just don't do 40 degrees. But maybe. I don't know if any of us knows anything about bowling but one of my wife's bucket lists is to go to Vegas so I'll take her.

**AU: Where did the name Menace come from?**

FP: It was more to do with mischief and the English version of Dennis the Menace, not the American one. It's a cartoon character in a magazine called Beano, and he had the red and black striped shirt with very spiky black hair, and a dog called Gnasher.

NM: We wanted to have that on that undertone of like, we're not sure what's going to happen with these guys, it's menacing... and we tried to do sing-along songs and get the Oi! side of it going, we started this Oi! all off with Sham 69 and Slaughter and the Dogs, we're the ones that are credited for starting that, it's not me saying that, it's historically documented that we're one of the bands that started Oi! off, we're even in the Dr. Martens magazine, the book that comes with the Dr. Marten shoes, as one of the founders of Oi! FP: "Tomorrow's World" was the first song to have the word "Oi!" in it around late '76 early '77. That was the whole Menace thing at the beginning, you know? Street punk, definitely the first street punk band.

[www.menace77.co.uk](http://www.menace77.co.uk)



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## Rebel Priest

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Rebel Priest: Jayme Black, Benny Kemp, Nate Pole, and together we create the megazord, Rebel Priest! We are infamous for making all the mayo in your house into sriracha mayo.

**AU: What's the meaning behind the band's name?**

Jayme Black: We could give ya a bullshit answer about Germanic etymology and rebellious quantum spirituality, but in truth is was the one we all liked outta the hundreds we came up with.

**AU: Who's in the band? What other bands have the members been in?**

JB: Benny and I were in a band called Lust Boys back, he plays guitar and I'm a bass player now, Nate is from New Zealand and likes to drum. Everybody sings, but in reality it's Jay-Z the time-travelling vampire.

**AU: Give us a brief band history.**

JB: We started about two years ago, I think, we all just wanted to start a band and we were all in bands that weren't really doing anything. Benny and myself were in Lust Boys for a while but that ended, when I arrived on the mainland I started a band called the Toxiks with Nate and that fell apart, so when Benny came to Vancouver, we met up and started Rebel Priest with the best parts of our other bands, now we just write tunes we wanna hear and we are a writing machine, never been in a band that has this much chemistry naturally, it's fucking awesome!

**AU: Describe your sound to someone who has never heard you?**

JB: We've been called thrash n roll, or thrash rock, but we just call ourselves rock n roll. A hideously deformed creature of superhuman rock and roll.

**AU: What are some of your songs about?**

JB: Sci-fi movies, comics, freedom, Phillip K. Dick, Michael Moorcock, power of the green... Nate's bad beat poetry?

**AU: What are the biggest influences on your sound and the look of the band?**

JB: Basically it's if Motorhead, Hanoi Rocks, and Rose Tattoo had a Bowery brawl in eight-inch stilettos after drinking a crate of Jack Daniels on the train to Coney Island to fight The Warriors.

**AU: Are you working on releasing an album?**

JB: Always. We currently have a couple albums and one single online, but haven't pressed anything yet, check out our latest album, *Enabler* on Bandcamp!

**AU: Does the band get many groupies looking for meaningless sex after the shows?**

JB: Meaningless!? What are you trying to say!? Our

Rebel Priest



girlfriends love us?

**AU: Is it best to get drunk or stoned before taking in your show?**

JB: A good cocktail of whiskey, weed, and/or a nice chianti with fava beans, or nothing if you don't put the lotion on the skin!

**AU: What can the people expect from your live show?**

JB: Showboat Benny, Skeletor Bonham drumming, and a silver fox mullet, on Bottlestore Galactica.

**AU: Tell us something you don't want your mother to know.**

Benny: I did actually eat that pie in 1976.

Nate: I smoke marijuanas.

Jayme: All that porn on your TV bill, wasn't Ron...

**AU: If you were going to start a cover band, what band would you choose and why?**

JB: Captain Beefheart: Trout Mask Replica, tribute. It's something the world was never ready for.

**AU: Future touring plans?**

JB: Spring/Summer 2017, and New Zealand/Japan Skype tours so far, but we are open for anywhere. But it's hard when our drummer is an electric kiwi, makes for interesting power issues. We have some killer shows coming up in the New Year, but we are taking the winter to write a new album.

**AU: Any plans for Christmas?**

JB: Band potluck to remember George Michael.

[rebelpriest.bandcamp.com](http://rebelpriest.bandcamp.com)

[Facebook.com/rebelpriestofficial](https://www.facebook.com/rebelpriestofficial)



## Daggermouth

Interview by David Goertzen and Josh Hauta

When you have had almost as many past members as Santana and your band is named after a mechanical fish with the Iron Sheiks break-your-fucking-neck attitude, Daggermouth is truly here to set the record straight. 2004 saw the rise of one of the most prolific pop punk bands to come out of Western Canada and they did it in perfect fashion; the hard-hitting approach of your favorite hardcore bands blended perfectly with an upbeat melody that allows the vocals to ebb and flow really help carry the songs from start to finish. With the debut of *Stallone* in 2006 and *Turf Wars* in 2007, the band had legs and looked like it wouldn't be slowing down anytime soon, but after three years of hectic touring the life on the road caught up with the band. Nearly a decade has passed and many projects have come and gone but the looming success of the mid 2000s has left the remaining members of Daggermouth wanting more. Stu McKillop traded in his guitar for the microphone and with the trusted help of some close friends Daggermouth is once again on top of their game. 2017 has seen the band gaining steam playing their hometown of Vancouver, an appearance at Montreals Pouzza Festival, a double-header out east, a Western Canadian tour, and a tour of Japan already under their belt, we caught up with various band members to find out what's coming up next.

**Absolute Underground: So, you guys are back! How long was the hiatus?**

KL: Nine years? We broke up in January or February '09.

DD: Just under a decade.

**AU: What have you been up to for the last nine years?**

SM: I (Stu) have been recording and mastering everything under the sun. Rain City Recorders has become my life for the last decade. New Comeback Kid album *Outsider* just dropped and I had a blast recording that LP.

Kenny has been wrestling tons and hitting the gym. He is also a full time chihuahua dad to two beautiful bug-eyed princesses.

Dan Don got his university degree, and he now thinks he is better than me. We love Dan Don, the Dmouth camp is very proud to finally have a university grad amongst us. Dan is a nurse, tour injuries will be no big deal from here on out.

Dana is a server at a well known restaurant. He is mostly known for serving up the dankest egg salad smelling farts on tour.

Stu Ross is a multi hundredare recording artist who plays in Comeback Kid and tours the world. We love the Toad and wish he could clone himself.

**AU: So how has the new, revamped lineup been received?**

KL: It's been fun. All the shows have been awesome! There hasn't been a single show where I'm like, "Oh, why the fuck are we doing this again?" Everything's been rad. We just came back from Newfoundland which was really fun.

**AU: Did you get Screeched in?**

KL: I did! I didn't kiss a fish because they didn't have one at the bar but I got to drink Screech and say the thing about "Jib's long draw" or whatever it is.

**AU: Sweet! So, you guys played Pouzza Fest as well?**

KL: Yeah! That was in May. That was kind of the thing that got us back together. Dan Don talked to them and they said they were interested in having us do a set.

DD: It kind of gave us the motivation to actually get going!

**AU: So, you got Stu singing now, right?**

KL: Yeah! Stu's singing now. He used to play guitar. He did all the backups and stuff. He recorded us, too! He's super smart. A lot of the vocal melodies and patterns and even some of the lyrics from the first two albums were Stu's ideas, mostly, anyways!



## HARDCORE ALLEY

So, it's not like we just got the winner of, "You can be in INXS" to come sing for us!

**AU: Or that Marky Mark movie!**

KL: Yeah! Stu and I have been the longest members of the band anyways. Nick, the singer who was on *Stallone* and *Turf Wars*, wasn't even our original singer. We had a guy named Ron Lowe singing for us, originally, way back before Dan Don was even in the band! Nick's just really busy now and didn't really show an interest in it. And a lot of us are still friends and want to have fun.

DD: We missed hanging out and I mean, Stu has a great voice! He's just a really talented musician. He's one of those dudes who tries something and is good at it and is like "I suck!" He was actually doing vocals for Youth Decay with our bass player, Dana, and other guitar player. I guess he really enjoyed it.

**AU: Are you working on new music? How has your writing process changed?**

SM: Yup! I just got back from Rufus guitar shop having my guitar set up for recording. Drums are already complete on one new song. Guitars should be done this week.

The writing process is pretty much the same as it was before but I'm way less of a controlling dick with the music. Kenny wrote the riffs for the new song and I helped him put it together into a song.

**AU: So, Dan, you live in Winnipeg full time? How does that work for practice?**

KL: We practice for like a day before tours.

DD: Sometimes I'll come up for a week. It depends on what we have coming up, really.

KL: The only time it's become a bit of a hassle is now that we're working on new songs. But it's not so bad with the internet now.

**AU: Other than Vancouver, what is your favourite city to play?**

SM: We love playing California! LA and the surrounding areas were like a second home to us when we were touring full time. Pomona backyard house shows are so fucking fun! We had the police chopper show up twice to one show we played. It was rowdy!

**AU: Long ago, I heard some instrumental Daggermouth tracks. Are these going to come back and actually be songs for us to enjoy?**

SM: A few of them will! Some of them have already been made into songs though!

**AU: So, when can we expect to hear these tunes?**

SM: When the Canucks win the Stanley Cup!

KL: [laughs] It's been nine or ten years already so, people can wait a little longer! But it'd be nice to hit the studio in the new year.

**AU: I heard you know a guy!**

KL: Yeah, but he doesn't want to record us!

SM: I don't want to record my own band anymore! I did it for the last Youth Decay album and it was a nightmare!

KL: No, it's too much! So, if anybody who owns a record label is reading this with an extra whack of cash, put us in the studio, buddy!

**AU: Any final words before you expire?**

SM: Thank you for taking the time to read all our fart stories. We are writing a new full length record and preparing to travel the world playing shows. We really just wanna have a great time with each other. We have known each other for so long that we are like a gaggle of brothers. I'm super excited to piss off and annoy my brothers for a few more years.

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# Absolute Album Reviews



## Arisen From Nothing - Broken Collective Wave Records

Mixing the powerful brands of Lamb Of God and Five Finger Death Punch really gets the metal grooves going. The opening track "Chaos" is super memorable and packs quite a punch with its Zakk Wylde approved guitar squeals and big bluesy chorus. You can picture these guys listening to tough guy metal and doing dead lifts in the garage all day. "American Patriot" is a BLS sounding classic, full of irony but also pride and the chorus lyrics and heavy riffs stick right off the bat.

Each song on this five track EP is killer. EPs would suck with filler and these guys keep it lean putting the mosh pit-starting ordinance up front each and every minute. Lots of guitar chugging and larynx damaging howls keep those biceps flexing and heads banging but a good sense of song will keep them coming back for more and this band doesn't sacrifice tunefulness for brutality.

Well-planned and executed guitar solos up the melodic game and show these guys are metal to the core. "Born Hated" ends the EP with a fucking fire works show full of southern-metal grind and blast beats usually only heard on the battlefield.

-Dan Potter

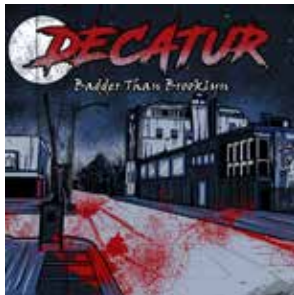


## Vvon Dogma I - Communion Independent

Android grooves slapped and tapped out on a nine string bass instrument is what sets this new band apart from the others. Djent related genres are full of the extra string connoisseurs but the mashing up of genres like EDM, prog-rock, death metal and throw in some funk too makes for a crazy listening experience. "Communion" comes out of the gates like a Primus meets Meshuggah chimaera with creepy ice-cold auto-tune vocals.

"Lithium Blue" is like something twisted Kanye West would put together to be outrageous. That auto-tune sounds lonely as massive rattling riffs bust out headbanging grooves and the drums add some robotic beats that must have almost killed the drummer. This is an exciting EP, it's quite short so it definitely leaves me wanting more of these strange creations. The format of the group seems very refreshing too, with the addition of a eight-string guitarist and a electronic DJ sound creator there multiplying the sonic chaos. They have the heaviness for the last track "The Mask" which has some gnarly slap grooves that make you think Periphery has gone all Funkadelic.

-Dan Potter



## Decatur - Badder Than Brooklyn Independent

On "Internal War," the band rages on as the vocalist barks out simplistic slabs of agony in the style of Wayne Static. This album clearly wants to rock you with its pitiless blasts of testosterone that rivals Lamb Of God's fits of anarchy and early Metallica-like disdain for authority of any kind. Joe Duplantier from Gojira produces it in his Brooklyn studio so the sounds are super sharp and tight doing this excellent bands sweaty performance justice.

There is plenty of searing lead guitar like on "Into the Night," but the focus is definitely the shifting groove riffs that reach perfection in the swaggering "Vegas Girl." Chants and simple lyrical hooks shape this story about a girl who tries to take the money and run. Pop hooks usually screw with the heaviness in metal either by adding needed contrast or by destroying a perfectly good headbanging smack down. But these guys know what they are doing by not letting the search for hooks draw them down the path towards wack-metal. Think Pantera approved memorable song writing where the thunderous riffing isn't sacrificed even one bit.



All the tracks keep things short and sweet. "Bottled Inside" is a furious ax wielding blast of true heaviness that should go on forever but it cracks you over the head and disappears into the forest from which it came. This album is a lean and mean trip through tales of urban chaos, so be prepared to fight.

-Dan Potter



## Insurrection - Extraction Galy Records

The sound of a grinding larynx sets "System Failure" ablaze as indictments are belted out in the direction of the faces that should pay the cost. Groovy metallic chunks of guitar riffs are the inflictors of damage ripping it up Decapitated style. Screaming, "We are the end" on the track "Onward to Extinction" makes it obvious these guys are up to tackling the horror of being a realist.

The album cover depicts a machine like overlord that has converted a bunch of suit and tie-wearing guys into glowing eyed automatons. In contrast, their metal is quite liberating in its boom and blast beating unity, whether it's the low-tuned chugging grooves or the hair on fire speed picking race to the gallows. This Quebec based band also has several songs sung in French like "Le Prix A Payer," which comes across as a Dying Fetus born in France.

These guys definitely know their modern metal as the album is full of late 90s and 2000s based musical concepts. The track "Assassins" plays that early Lamb Of God fury to perfection showing they're in favor of keeping things classic for the benefit of scruffy short wearing metalheads everywhere.

-Dan Potter



## Buried Realm - The Ichor Carcinoma Independent

Fast and melodic metal lays the ground for some bowel shaking

vocal grunting. It's an interesting mix to say the least from this studio project that also sees an impressive array of guest contributions. "Asphyxiations Lullaby" has a sing along chorus that comes creeping out at you through the screams and blasting palm muted guitar riffs. The razor sharp production leaves nothing to chance and the classical shredding is cold enough to freeze the ocean.

"On Serpent Soil" brings out some industrial strength chugging that locks super-super tight with the double kick drumming. Wailing guitar solos ring out one after the other creating a truly blazing instrumental reminiscent of some of Jeff Loomis' best work. "Unscrupulous" bubbles up from the Earths molten core with vocals that sound earthquake inducing. Of course there is more neo-classical guitar shredding to, just enough to keep that jaw dropped.

The mix of synths, tight ass drums and granite burrowing throat abominations make this a release you don't want to miss out on.

-Dan Potter



## Evilheart - Quinquaginta Test Your Metal Records

Demented hyperactive thrash metal band Evilheart are the real thing people should be afraid of coming out of Mexico. Their brand of Venom like whiplash inducing rhythms and technical guitar leads are as intoxicating as vodka mixed with a cobra's poison. "Perfection Collapsed" is one hell of a thrill ride through ripping speed riffs and suffocating vocals that lock you in via sheer brutality. You won't be able to turn away from the carnage.

"Supremacy and Holocaust" is like Megadeth with Cronos on bass. Huge wrist shredding riffing blast out relentlessly laying down the law as it pertains to the sonic anarchy that cannot be contained. The musicians can definitely play as they sound like masters of carnage with their instruments spewing out wild but refined approaches. This is as solid an album you're going to get with each song detonating the same relative arsenal of devastation.

The track "Genetic Betrayal" is a marvelous concoction of death metal and dark industrial effects complete with ripping guitar solos that seems poached straight from "Human" era Death. The grueling blitzkriegs never get tiresome; trust me you won't want to turn away.

-Dan Potter



## Moonlight Desires - Just The Hits 1981-1985 Infamous Butcher Records

If you are into metal covers of non-metal songs then this is the perfect album you've been waiting for. Featuring covers by Duran Duran, Rod Stewart, Simply Red and much more; it is a super fun listen. The music is played with passion and executed with rocking precision.


"Sunglasses At Night" by Corey Hart is transformed into a fast paced punk anthem that is intense and relentlessly catchy because obviously it's a pop song being blasted out with mean guitars. "Hungry Like The Wolf" is sped up to a pulse racing level that turns the original strange moody recording into a funfest of classic guitar based rockingness. Level 42's "Something About You" is converted into a Greenday song that I think Greenday wished they'd have written.

I'm not a big fan of that YouTube born phenomenon of doing some prissy little ditty that's popular for a couple weeks in the style of cast iron hard metal that's meant to last but this release was an interesting trip and would make a great stocking stuffer.


-Dan Potter

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## FIGGY AND THE SCROOGES

### Figgy & The Scrooges

Interview by Ty Stranglehold

**Absolute Underground: Who are you talking to today, and have you been naughty or nice this year?**

Figgy Slop: Figgy Slop. Is there a separate list for surly?

**AU: Who else is in the band and what is on their Christmas wish list?**

FS: Besides myself on vocals, it's Lou Scrooge on guitar, Jew Scrooge on bass, and Rusty Scrooge on drums. I'm pretty sure they'd wish for me to stop complaining that we don't practice enough.

**AU: What was the genesis of the Figgy & The Scrooges band?**

FS: We all play in other bands throughout the year, but I always wanted to have a punk xmess band. I had the name Figgy & the Scrooges. I pictured smashing a ginger bread house on stage and rolling around in it the way Iggy use to do with broken glass during his Stooges days. My way is less sharp and bloody, more sticky, then Lou came up with "All These Fucking Toys" to the tune of "Search and Destroy," and we knew we had to do it. We talked about it for three years before we actually practiced and played our first show. That was seven years ago.

**AU: What is the premise and themes you adhere to?**

FS: In one of our originals "The Scrooges' Carol," I sing "Figgy cares," and the rest of band responds, "Scrooges don't give a shit." That not only sums up our band, but also a lot of folks' mixed emotions about this time of year.

**AU: Take us through your discography and highlight some classic tracks from each record.**

FS: We have a seven-inch, three-song EP called

*Alcohololiday* that was released in 2013. Other than the above mentioned "Scrooges' Carol," it has two other originals. We have plans for another EP next year that will feature "12 Shots of Xmess."



**AU: Holiday drink of choice? How many nogs can you snog?**

FS: Cafe Bourbon Street, the local dive bar where we conceived the band, first practiced and played, offers a drink every December called a Figgy Fist. It's cola, Fireball, gin, and peppermint schnapps garnished with a miniature candy cane. They sell it to help Figgy Fest raise money for a local food bank. Everyone that orders it says it sounds horrible, but tastes surprisingly good. It's definitely helped me me get jolly a few times.

**AU: What are you gonna be asking the big guy for this year?**

FS: I'd ask him to finally return that xmess mix tape I loaned him in '05. There was some really good shit on there.

**AU: What gigs do you have planned for this holiday season?**

FS: The only one we do every year, Figgy Fest! December 16th at Ace of Cups in Columbus, Ohio. All proceeds to benefit the local food bank. This year, the other bands include Ho Ho Hoes, Mitzvahs, 3 Speed Sleigh, Placenta Claus & the Human Santapede, Ebenezer Booze, and of course, Figgy & the Scrooges

**AU: Why is this the most wonderful time of the year?**

FS: I get to wear bells on my green and red Chuck Taylors and give birth to an immaculately conceived baby saviour snowman on stage.

**AU: Final words for the little children of the world?**

FS: Don't be a Scrooge, try to give a shit.

[figgyandthescrooges.bandcamp.com](http://figgyandthescrooges.bandcamp.com),

[facebook.com/FiggyAndTheScrooges/](https://facebook.com/FiggyAndTheScrooges/)

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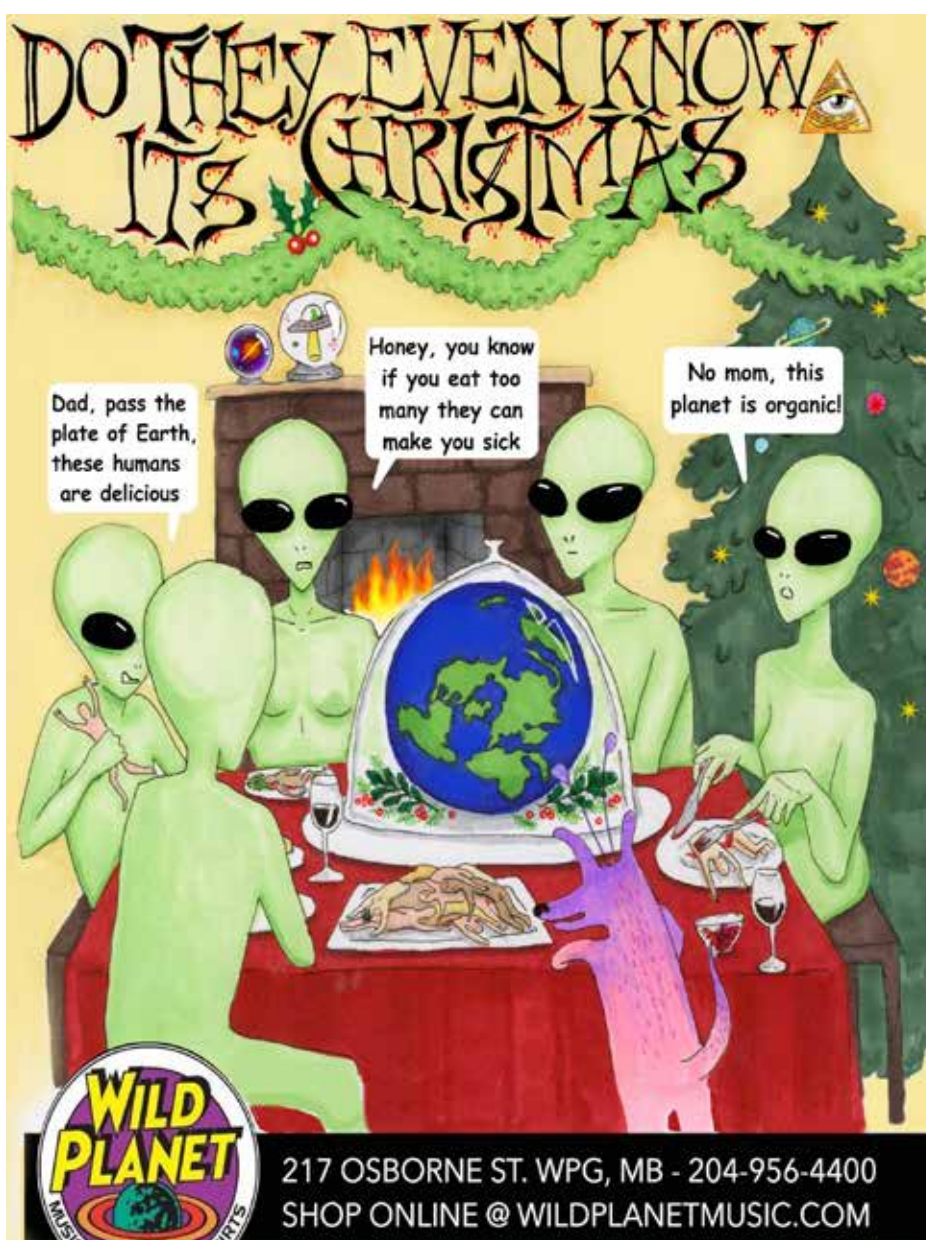
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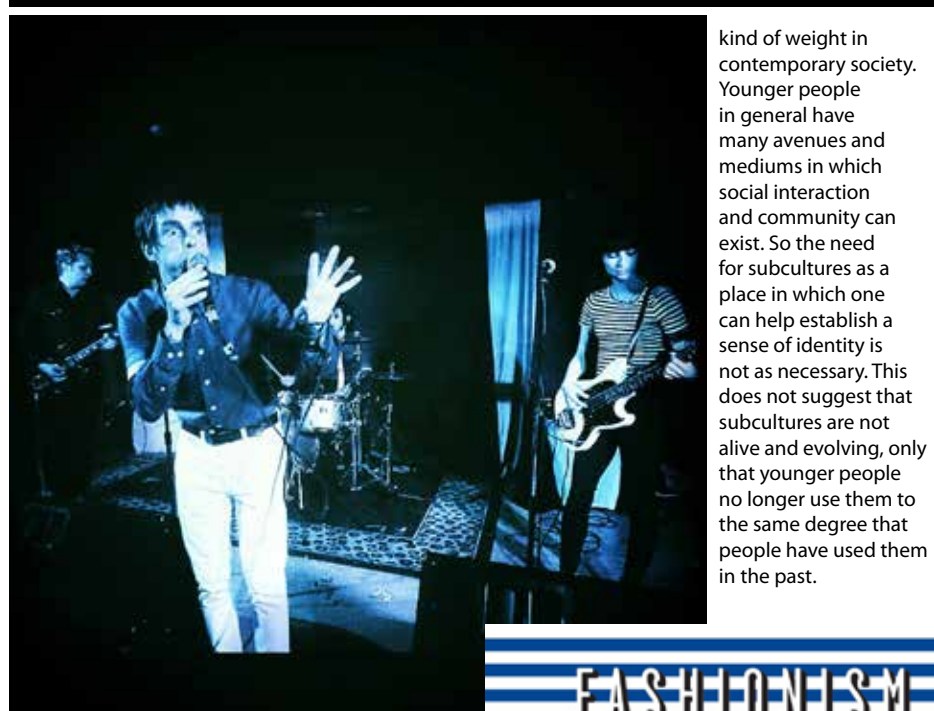
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## Fashionism

Interview by Esther Andrews

**Absolute Underground: Why are we smashing the state with our face?**

Jeffrey McCloy: You have to smash the state with something.

**AU: How much of your band name has to do with actual fashion?**

JM: Just the "fashion" part, you can add "ISM" on too just about anything.

**AU: Do you think Canada has a healthy Mod scene? Why or why not?**

JM: No is the short answer. Why? Well, most subcultures, especially the ones based out of youth movements, no longer carry the same

kind of weight in contemporary society. Younger people in general have many avenues and mediums in which social interaction and community can exist. So the need for subcultures as a place in which one can help establish a sense of identity is not as necessary. This does not suggest that subcultures are not alive and evolving, only that younger people no longer use them to the same degree that people have used them in the past.

significant music and counter culture movements. People tend to see it as a very rigid subculture with so many rules and I would very much disagree with this observation. Other than a strict sense of style (which makes you always look dead cool) it's one of the most evolving subcultures.

**AU: Tell me the highlights of your eastern Canada tour. Any notable differences between playing shows in the east as opposed to the west coast?**

JM: Fashionism have only gone as far east as Quebec, so we have not played the East Coast. However the most notable difference between playing Quebec and the West Coast is that when people yell at you from the crowd, they do so in French versus English. As for my personal highlight, it was playing with the Pale Lips in Montreal.

**AU: What tour plans do you have in the works?**

JM: Fashionism is doing a Scandinavian tour in the spring.

**AU: Any plans for a full length? Or do you just prefer putting out 45s?**

JM: We have a singles collection LP that will come out for the Scandinavian tour, and I think two more singles are in the works. I personally love 45s but to be honest, I just love records in general.

**AU: Whose face sold more records/T-shirts?**

JM: If you are referring to our second single? We made an even number of records with the different band members' faces. We did this for good reason, because Robin would out sell the rest of us combined if we based the sleeves on demand, due to who has the best mug shot! Only Robin has ever made it onto a shirt.

**AU: Tell me about the importance of vinyl records for you.**

Robin: Maybe it's a bit esoteric, but the physicality of records is important to me. They're relics of a particular space and time. It's like mailing a letter versus sending a text, or taking film photos. The

## THIS IS FASHIONISM

act of listening to records, or shopping for records, or DJing with records is by nature intentional, and all of that is way more representative of my relationship with music than any of the more disposable formats.

There's that idea of a piece of pottery being more beautiful for having been broken... It's not exactly the same, but I love getting glimpses of a particular record's journey – when you find something weird tucked into the sleeve, or some teenager in the '60s wrote their name on the cover. Records become infused with my own experiences, too; I bought my first 7" in '96 but can still tell you where I got most of my collection, and under what circumstances. I've worked in a lot of record shops and owned one for a bit, and remember who I sold particular records to. They create these weird ties and connections, this strange community. I also love being surprised – in high school I thrifted tons of LPs just based on the cover art; lots were awful, but that's how I discovered The Monks and The Vapors. I still buy piles of mystery 45s hoping to find something cool. When something rad comes up on Spotify it can be exciting, but the experience doesn't quite carry the same weight.

**AU: Top Five Vancouver bands right now?**

JM: This is my list, I suspect everyone else would have a different one. Sore Points, Corner Boys, Spectres, Night Things, Fashionism.

**AU: Dream gig?**

JM: Whenever I dream about gigs, it's usually more of a nightmare. I will have this reoccurring dream where I forget how to play the songs, or I forget all the words when singing.

[fashionism.bandcamp.com](http://fashionism.bandcamp.com)

[facebook.com/pg/fashionishim](https://facebook.com/pg/fashionishim)



As for the Mod scene in Canada, it tends to go in waves it does everywhere. It's a very exciting subculture because the musical movements that tend to embrace it are ever evolving. So when you look at the subculture over the course of time it has linked itself with over a dozen



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THU 7	CALGARY BEER CORE & METALHEADS UNITED PRESENT PUNK VS. METAL FROM SIX TIL EIGHT / BAYONET / JESUS CHRYSLER / HIVE	HERD OF WASTERS AND GUESTS	SAT 30
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THU 21	CALGARY BEER CORE & METALHEADS UNITED PRESENT PUNK VS. METAL OUR OLD WAYS / DETHGOD / WESTERN DEATH / DETHEROUS	CALGARY BEER CORE & METALHEADS UNITED PRESENT PUNK VS METAL BANDS TBA	THU 11
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## Steven Blush

Interview by Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what are you best known for?**

Steven Blush: Steven Blush, best known for the *American Hardcore* book and film, and for other books like *New York Rock* and *Lost Rockers*.

**AU: What initially drew you to punk rock?**

SB: My dad worked around the corner from CBGB in New York. In the late 70s, in my early teenage years, that was one of the local bars that would serve a minor like me. Then I started to hang around the record stores on St Mark's Place, so I discovered the scene developing there. It was day-and-night from the typical teen boredom I was experiencing, so it all moved very fast. By the time I got to college in Washington, DC, there was a new breed of punk going on with Minor Threat and the Bad Brains, and it was all so inspiring. I supported that scene as the first college radio DJ playing these new singles on Dischord and Touch & Go, and as the kid promoter putting on all these insane DIY all-ages shows with Black Flag, Dead Kennedys, and the like. That was a huge influence in my life, and the basis for my research for *American Hardcore*.

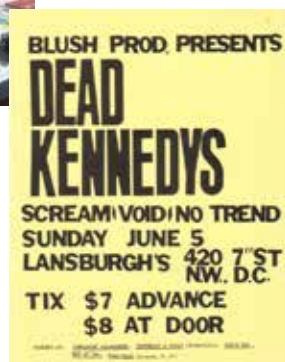
**AU: What books have you written in the past?**

SB: *American Hardcore*, *American Hair Metal*, *Lost Rockers*, *New York Rock*, and *45 Dangerous Minds*, a compilation of the most intense interviews from my 80s/90s publication, *Seconds Magazine*.

**AU: Tell us about your newest book, *New York Rock*.**

SB: *New York Rock: From the Rise of the Velvet Underground to the Fall of CBGB* is about that 40 years of artistic subculture in downtown Manhattan. New York was the Apple in decay, and in the dangerous ghettos below 14th Street, there arose a tough urban subculture of edgy artists, poets, writers and other

creative types who inspired each other, and spawned a distinctly intense form of rock music that continues to influence the world. It was the first time rock & roll was not "teeny bop," for teenage girls. It was adult music. In the



book, Patti Smith guitarist Lenny Kaye called the Velvet Underground "The Jean-Luc Goddard of rock music." It was the start of all underground and alternative music. The book goes into detail on hundreds of cult bands that you either know or should know. If you're a fan of rock history, this is a must read.

**AU: On the cover you have a picture of Joan Jett, Debbie Harry, New York Dolls and the Ramones. Where and when was this picture taken? Were they all hanging out together?**

SB: That is a real photo by punk photographer Roberta Bayley. It's a great backstage shot from back in the day, not sure of the backstory. Truth be told, I did not want that cover at all. I did not write another punk book, the main focus is on the 80s and 90s. I wanted a cover photo of the original NYC-era White Zombie from 1986 by Michael Lavine, the Nirvana photographer. That would've been great. The cover was the publisher's attempt to jump on the "Please Kill Me" bandwagon. I was pressured into the cover, and I finally relented because they said it was part of a big marketing

plan — that was never implemented. So I kinda fucking hate them for playing me. The book is a success because of my efforts, and in spite of their corporate CYA culture.

**AU: What are some of the craziest tales in the new book?**

SB: I love the early Kiss stories. There's deep history about their uncool early days — as well as of their association with managers Bill Aucoin and Sean Delaney, who were these Greenwich Village gay swingers, fist-fucking at leather bars and whatnot. You'll never think the same again about "The Hottest Band in the Land."

**AU: Any stories you can share that didn't make it into the book?**

SB: The introductory chapters of the book were whittled down from 30 page histories to two page overviews. So you don't get to read the entire history of New York Metal and New York Disco and the like, so you don't get all those stories about Mafia-owned clubs like the Limelight or L'Amour or even Studio 54. There was also legal reasons for omitting certain stories that, while true, cannot be legally verified all these years later. Which is kinda bullshit, but whatever...

**AU: You also wrote and coproduced the documentary *American Hardcore*. How did that come about?**

SB: I was approached by director Paul Rachman, who made cool rock videos like Alice in Chains "Man in the Box," Temple of the Dog "Hunger Strike," Pantera "Cemetery Gates," and Bad Brains "I Against I." With my book as the roadmap, we made a documentary film that got accepted to the Sundance Film Festival, and picked up for theatrical distribution by Sony Pictures Classics. That was a great ride, and the film remains a cult classic.

**AU: Any other documentaries planned for the future?**

SB: There is a *Lost Rockers* documentary that I made with Rachman should come out in the near future.



**AU: Have you eaten at the new CBGB restaurant in Newark Airport? Did you ever eat at the old CBGB?**

SB: I have eaten at the CBGB restaurant at Newark Airport. It was weird, ordering food there on an iPad. Certainly no worse than any other overpriced airport food... I do remember Hilly Krystal serving food at CBGB when I was like 14 years old. Even though I was young and drunk, I was not stupid enough to order a hamburger or a bowl of "Hilly's Chili."

**AU: What is your favourite era of music, and bands and why?**

SB: That's a difficult question for a music head like me. But if I had to choose an era, I'd say there was a golden era from 1976-1996 — from the rise of punk and hardcore and modern metal, until that point where rap, techno and alt-rock started to get corporate and predictable. I dropped out of the music business around 1998-1999, when the same shithheads from high school who hated underground music, had suddenly become hipster indie rockers. I turned my focus to setting the record straight about the American Hardcore explosion, which is still the most important underground musical movement of our time. There's some excellent band still these days, but the music scene itself is a fucking joke.

**AU: Are you already thinking about your next book, what will it be about?**

SB: Shhh - it's a secret! Joking aside, I have a few books in the works to be released between 2018-2020 that are a bit too early to announce. But I swear you'll dig 'em!

**AU: Where can people buy your newest book? Website?**

SB: All my books are available fastest and cheapest on Amazon. No excuses. Time to get schooled.

[www.stevenblush.com/](http://www.stevenblush.com/)



# Rose Archie

Interview by Malcolm Hassin

**Absolute Underground: Where are ya from?**

Rose Archie: Canim Lake, by Hundred Mile House.

**AU: What's your first memory of skateboarding?**

RA: Seeing my sister kick flip, she was in grade seven so I would have been in grade five.

**AU: How many years have you been riding?**

RA: I have been pushing around since 90-fuckin-2.

**AU: What were your influences growing up?**

RA: Aw man, I had a small scene I was a part of, but when I got to see the Slam City jam, Alysia Steamer, Vanessa Tomez, Jamie Reaez, they were all killing it back then. Jessie Van was my favourite girl Canadian at the time, so I would have to say the late 90s Slam City era really influenced me.

**AU: What was it like being a girl in the early 90s skateboard scene, when it was primarily a male dominated sport, compared to now-a-days?**

RA: Hahaha, that's hilarious, you were accepted within the skateboard scene but the people who didn't skateboard didn't get you. I remember being called a skid, all the jocks hated the skaters, we were called dykes, I was accused of being a lesbian 'cause I didn't have boyfriend but I skateboarded. Compared to now-a-days, you can be either or and you're accepted. Times have totally changed since I was a girl in skateboarding, 'cause there use to be maybe one girl at the skate park or you would be lucky to even see one.

**AU: And what about now?**

RA: It's different, there are girls all over, the bar has been totally raised, you have girls that are just

killing it nowadays. Because of the Olympics, people are progressing at a really high rate, I just got back from California, and witnessing it is something else.

**AU: What's Stop Drop And Roll?**

RA: It's a contest I wanted to put together because I didn't think there was anything like that going on (like an all-girls contest). So I just came to SBC and threw it at ya, you were so down. I have always put on punk concerts since I was a teenager, with my sister Charmy, we used to put on skateboard contests as well, did a few to raise money for Leeside, kind of to do it for the community and basically bring girls together, because I never really saw anything like that in Vancouver. I wanted to do something different, bring skateboarding and punk rock together and just have girls come and learn get a bunch

of prizes together, get more girls boards. It was kinda something that turned into a huge thing with everyone's support; Skate Like a Girl from Seattle got involved in it, and Kristen and Shari and the Skate Witches, they were all on board, and so down with Stop Drop and Roll, next year's going to be the fourth year.

**AU: What tunes hype you up to skate?**

RA: This is a funny one because it depends on the crew I am with. My music could go any where from Danzig and Operation Ivy to Fleetwood Mac to Maria Carey, to Beyonce and Rihanna, some Trap music, it's all over the map, but basically I love punk rock.

**AU: How do you feel about the Vancouver skateboard scene?**

RA: Well you know... I moved here in the early 2000s, I used to skate Hastings a lot, and you would be skating with Josh Even, Alex Chalmers,

# SHRED SESSION

Sluggo and the old crew. We didn't have a plaza, we had Bonser and Leeside was fenced up when I moved here. Seeing the progression of Leeside and also what the Skateboard Coalition does for Vancouver, getting the parks rolling and supporting the youth, I think what they do is great. People trip out when I say how many parks we have in our radius of Vancouver, people are blown away. Watch the documentary Chris Haslam did, he hit all the parks in one day and there was so many, so it's a good scene up here in Canada, eh. We have an indoor park called SBC and basically no other indoors that are not corporate run, and I support that shit because it's local and community... fuck, Chi Pig chills here,

and that's fucking punk rock.

**AU: Shout-outs? Thank yous?**

RA: The girls I would really like to thank are the girls back in high school, and I honestly can't even remember their names right now, haha.

**AU: Any suggestions of who we should interview next?**

RA: I would love to see a Shari White interview, that would be fuckin' sick, I would like to see a Jit interview, he doesn't really talk to anyone, so it would be sick to see what he has to say!

[www.sbcrestaurant.ca/](http://www.sbcrestaurant.ca/)

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## The 10th and Final HKR Xmas

Interview with Dylan Ludwig of Harvest King Records

By AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Dylan Ludwig: My name is Dylan Ludwig, I have been the primary force behind Harvest King Records for about six years after taking the reins from my brother Justin, and Dylan Williams who founded it, but eventually moved to Vancouver. I've also played in a bunch of bands on the label, like Royal Red Brigade, Ballot Burner, and Kleins96.

**AU: Give us a little bit of background. Who are you and what are you guys all about?**

DL: HKR is a DIY record label and musicians' collective rooted in Regina SK that has been releasing a variety of punk and hardcore records and putting on shows for a decade now. We've tried to be a conduit for underground music on the Canadian prairies and in Saskatchewan in

particular, but we've also been involved in releasing records from bands like the Rebel Spell (BC), War//Plague (MN), and Coughing Fit (NY) as well. We've done about 34 releases in all over the last ten years, and put on a large portion of the punk and hardcore shows in Regina during that time, including two annual mini-festivals: Mayday and the HKR Xmas Bash.

**AU: What is the Xmas bash all about? Why will this be the last one?**

DL: The HKR Xmas Bash is an annual holiday punk show the label has put on since the beginning. It started as a fairly typical Xmas-time show and over the years has morphed into a really exciting event for the underground community in Regina. We use both venues in The Exchange, and have alternating sets from typically about nine or ten bands, plus potluck, secret santa, typically absurd

decorations and movie screens showing classic Xmas flicks; all the trimmings.

This is going to be the last year that the label throws the Xmas bash, partly because I'm now living in Toronto going to school, and I have been the main organizer, and partly in order to make way for the next generation. There are a lot of young bands and members of the scene who are poised to carry on where we are leaving off. I think that's what keeps scenes thriving, the older folk need to step out of the way at a certain point and let others step in. I already spoke to the crew who is thinking about taking over the holiday show next year, I'll be there and will probably play.

**AU: Will you guys still be throwing any shows in the future?**

DL: I sometimes throw shows in Regina when I

go back to visit, but again, it's kind of time for the torch to be passed. I'll probably always be playing in bands and being involved in scenes but I'm doing a PhD now, my brother is working in film and Dylan Williams is opening a cocktail lounge in Vancouver, so as we take on new things in life we kind of don't have the time to fully commit to promoting and other time-consuming stuff. Who knows what the future holds though, I've always dreamed about opening a venue.

**AU: Tell us about some of your most memorable Xmas shows... Any good stories?**

DL: We've had a lot of crazy times over the years. Mashed potato snowball fights and the upside-down cross Xmas tree come to mind.

**AU: What can we expect at this year's show? Who's playing, what other kinds of entertainment will we find?**

DL: We're really excited for Choke to headline. My brother and I definitely grew up in the era when they were touring Western Canada all the time, and we really wanted something special for the last show. It's a hard time for bands to make it work so we are pretty lucky to have them. We also have an amazing cross section of local bands, most of them really good friends of ours. The line-up includes Black Thunder, Kleins96, Amour Fou, Bermuda Love, Failed States, Blue Youth, Tomorrow Starts Today, Neck Lace, Midnight Gallows and Spirit of Vengeance.

**AU: As an organizer, what are you most looking forward to?**

DL: It's fun to see all the planning come together and just enjoy the party! Lots of cool people have left Regina over the years, so it's a nice time to see the scene at its best.

**AU: What does the future hold for the label and the people who run it?**



DL: Again, the label has been slowly becoming more and more inactive as the people behind it take on new projects. But the label has served as a good lightening rod for music in that community by helping to increase our visibility and credibility in the Canadian scene, so if I ever find myself back on the prairies I assume I'd work under that name again. There are others who still live there who might decide to take the HKR reins as well, but there are also new labels and collectives popping up to fill the void.

**AU: What should we know about you or this event that we don't already?**

DL: We offer a deal every year where you can pay the advanced ticket price at the door and save \$5 if you bring a donation of non-perishable food or winter clothing. Each year we are able to collect a van-load of donations for the Food Bank and the Carmichael Outreach in Regina.

**AU: Where can we find tickets, updates, and more information?**

DL: Tickets are available at Vintage Vinyl and X-Ray Records in Regina. You can find all the information on the Facebook event page.

**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

DL: Support your local underground!  
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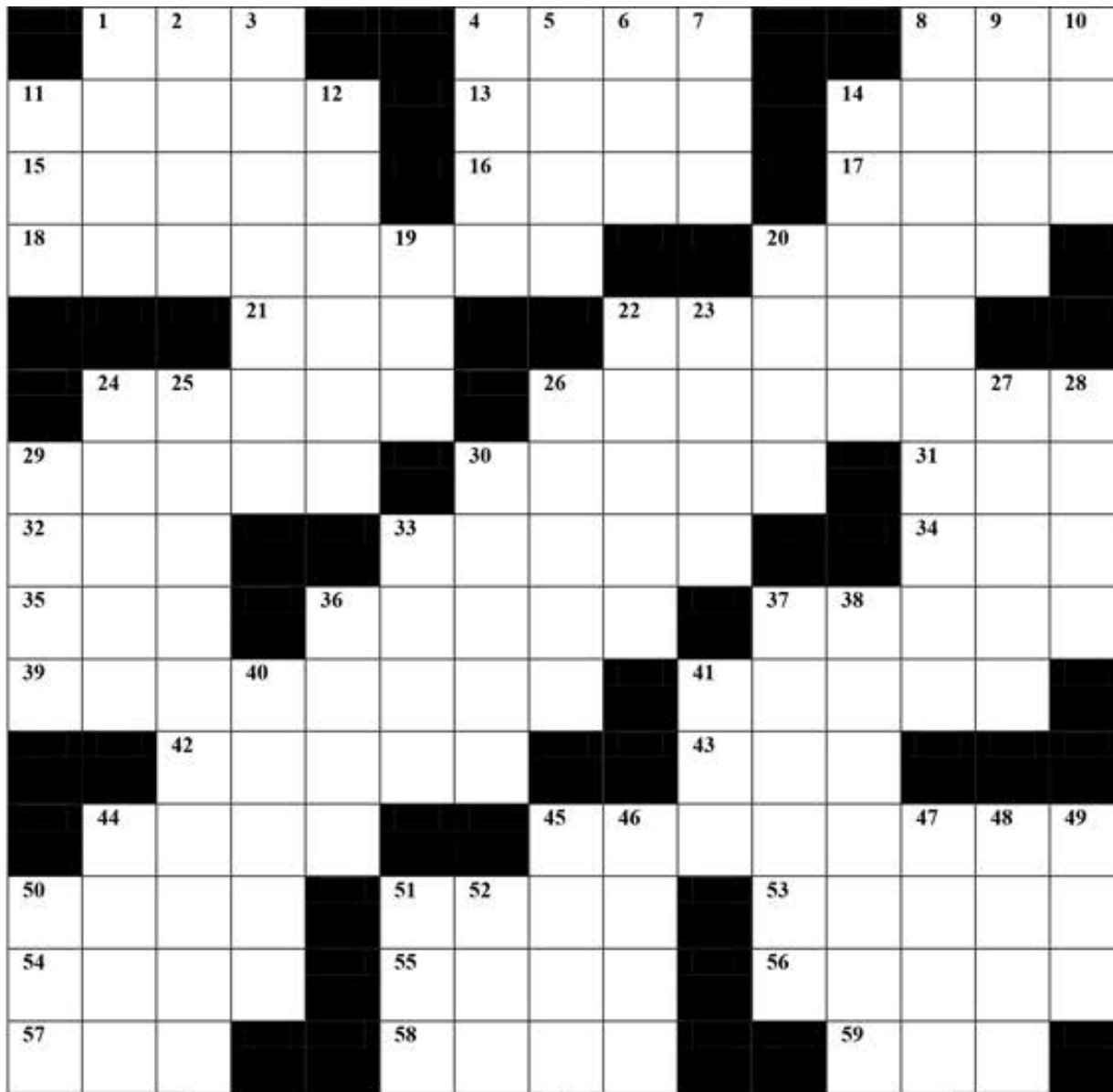
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3 SUNDAY CAROLYN MARK'S <b>HOOTENANNY</b> FREE // 4PM - 8PM	4 MONDAY <b>BLOOM</b> ALTERNATIVE ROCK NIGHT FREE / 8PM	5 TUESDAY ROAST EDITION <b>BLACK SHEEP</b> COMEDY // 8PM GRAYSON WALKER'S <b>KARAOKE</b> FREE // 9PM - 1AM	6 WEDNESDAY RETROWAVE WEDNESDAY <b>GAMES NIGHT</b> VORPAL GNOME DARK DUNGEON CRAWL FREE // 8PM - 1AM	7 THURSDAY MINI MADDNESS HOLIDAY MARKET 5PM - 10PM PUERTO RICO BENEFIT GENERAL GRUFF / DANE LOUCKS EMOCHANEL / UNDER PALMS 10PM / \$12	1 FRIDAY <b>MENDOZZA</b> HERON / SEER CHUNKASAURUS 9PM / \$10	2 SATURDAY 10th ANNUAL ROCK YOUR AWARENESS PARTY <b>DAYGLO ABORTIONS</b> AK-47 / SKIDMARXISTS 8PM FREE NALOXONE TRAINING / 10PM - \$15	
10 CAROLYN MARK'S <b>HOOTENANNY</b> FREE // 4PM - 8PM SUNDAY SWING FREE // 8:30PM	11 CLOSED FOR PRIVATE FUNCTION LIQUOR STORE OPEN UNTIL 11PM	12 BLACK SHEEP COMEDY // 8PM GRAYSON WALKER'S <b>KARAOKE</b> FREE // 9PM - 1AM	13 RETROWAVE WEDNESDAY <b>1ST VIC VINYL</b> MEET-UP 6 GUEST DJS FREE // 8PM - 1AM	14 FLATBED <b>KRAXXA</b> CREMATORY ASH 9PM / \$10	8 GNAR GNARS HATE THE RICH STINKHORN STRATEGIC ABUSE 9PM / \$10	9 THE RAMORES THE MANDLEBAUMS THE STIFFS 9PM / \$14	
17 CAROLYN MARK'S <b>HOOTENANNY</b> FREE // 4PM - 8PM SUNDAY SWING FREE // 8:30PM	18 LAST <b>BLOOM</b> ALTERNATIVE ROCK NIGHT OF THE YEAR! FREE / 8PM	19 BLACK SHEEP COMEDY // 8PM GRAYSON WALKER'S <b>KARAOKE</b> FREE // 9PM - 1AM	20 LIVE DATING GAME + VORPAL GNOME GAMES NIGHT FREE / 8PM	21 TREMBLERS OF SEVEN GREEN JELLY KING OX 9PM / \$10	15 TAPE HEADS VHS + MUSIC CASSETTE FAIR CONSUMER REPORT TIMING X / CROM/DAM 8PM - \$5 / 9PM - \$10	16 ANNUAL PUNK ROCK XMAS <b>ANGRY</b> SNOWMANS + HATE THE RICH 9PM	
24 CAROLYN MARK'S CHRISTMAS EVE <b>HOOTENANNY</b> FREE // 4PM - 8PM	25 J and GRAYSON <b>RUIN</b> CHRISTMAS 4PM to 10PM FULL TURKEY DINNER	26 BOXING DAY BLACK SHEEP COMEDY // 8PM GRAYSON WALKER'S <b>KARAOKE</b> FREE // 9PM - 1AM	27 CAROLYN MARK'S HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS 8PM	28 INTERZONE DANCE NIGHT DARK 80s / EBM & MORE 9PM / \$5	22 RAINSHADOW AL's <b>MUSTARD SEED</b> BENEFIT 9PM	23 MIFFED NEIGHBOURS VOID MIRROR TEENAGE WEDDING TOBIAS YOUNG MYSTERY LOVER 9PM / \$10	
31 <b>HOOTENANNY</b> FREE // 4PM - 8PM NEW YEARS EVE <b>BOUSADA</b> + GUESTS 9PM	<h2>2 Logan's Public House</h2> <p>ANNIVERSARY 1997 - 2017</p> <p>OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK MONDAY - THURSDAY : 3PM - 1AM FRIDAY : NOON - 1AM SATURDAY : 11AM - 1AM SUNDAY : 11AM - 12PM 1821 COOK STREET 250-360-2711</p>					29 VICTORIA PUNK & METAL YEAR END PARTY LIVE BANDS & DJS 9PM / \$10	30 <b>TEENAGE</b> VIOLETS PLUS GUESTS 9PM / \$10

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# Absolute Crossword



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ssorcA

1. Pounds (not Sterling)
4. Shift flats
8. League o' the Lakers
11. Licorice All-
13. Dumbfounded
14. A hearty drink from a jug
15. Japanimation classic
16. NJ hoopsters
17. Depeche
18. sdrawkca sdær ohw enO
20. Hairdos
21. J. Hendrix \_\_\_\_doo Child
22. Largest known creature ever
24. Ripley's Believe it \_\_\_\_!
26. dnuora deppilF
29. Oktoberfest Mug
30. Swindles
31. Rage
32. "Dial down the middle 1-800-CALL-\_\_\_\_"
33. Gas for a Dutch Oven?
34. Stihl or Husqvarna
35. Profit after expenses

36. "Hi" in Quebec
37. Mos. after Augs on calenders
39. drawer of toN
41. Happen as a consequence
42. Made noise like a cow
43. Not against
44. Young female
45. noiteerid degnahC
50. Contraction of National
51. A virile male
53. Boot out tenants
54. Peel
55. No Games. Just Sports.
56. Marching drum
57. In the style of
58. Not closed
59. Intl. Longshoremen's Union

\* Answers to questions with backwards clues should be written backwards

nwoD

1. Norse God of Mischief
2. Word for measuring sugar/alcohol
- Content in fermenting wine must
3. nwodedispu spilF
4. Opp of few
5. Was indebted to
6. Pet Doc
7. O'Neill and Sullivan
8. detrevnl
9. Offers at an Auction
10. Vital stat
11. Alveolus, e.g.
12. Wild West Pub
14. Upside down frown
19. Drunkard
20. Rules
22. An Earpp
23. Spotlight HOGS
24. Seal cousin
25. rettam fo trapretnouC
26. A guy who can't get no love from TLC
27. Enraged
28. Stitches up
29. Hourglass medium
30. Caesar or Greek
33. One of The A-Team
36. Cheers in Copenhagen
37. Makes cartoon ZZZZ's
38. nwodedispU
40. Earth e.g.
41. Every buffet has two
44. Windy Woman's name?
45. Bo, Luke or Daisy
46. Genesis Garden
47. Little tube
48. Beige shade
49. Highway sign abbrev
50. Heston's org.
51. \_\_\_\_-Cone
52. Helpful Hint

By Dan Scum

## Last issue's Answers

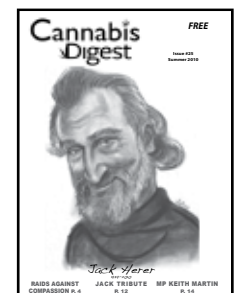
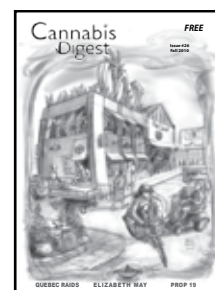
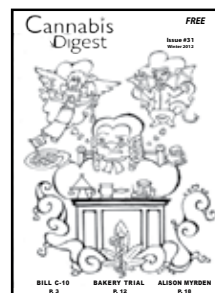


# Cannabis Digest



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## December Shows

**fri 1st Speakeasy**  
**sat 2nd The Civil Dead**  
**sun 3rd William Prince**  
**wed 6th WNV Music Bingo**  
**fri 8th Post Modern Connection**  
**sat 9th Volunteers / Charlie Handsome**  
**wed 13th WNV Comedy Night**  
**fri 15th Ancient Engines**  
**sat 16th Deepsounds**  
**wed 20th WNV Crib Night**  
**fri 22nd Leila Neverland**  
**wed 27th WNV Trivia Night**

WNV = WEDNESDAY NIGHT VARIETY

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